

REPRESENTATIONS OF INDIAN HISTORY AS TOOLS
FOR IDENTITY- RELEVANT CONCERNS:
A CULTURAL PSYCHOLOGICAL ANALYSIS

BY

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Abstract

The present research utilizes a cultural psychological perspective and considers the extent to which representations of history *reflect* and *promote* identity-relevant concerns (i.e., national identification, perceptions of present-day injustice in Indian society). Across four studies, I adapt a situation sampling methodology to explore the bi-directional relationship between collective memory and national identity. Studies 1 and 2 examine how recollections of a national past, and preferential selections of particular historical representations are associated with national identification. As part of a free-recall task, participants in Study 1 ($N = 55$) generated three historical events that they considered as important and relevant for the study of Indian history. Results indicate that a majority of events generated reflected nation-glorifying themes, compared to events that focused on assassinations of national leaders and wrongdoing against Muslims (a subordinate group in India; critical events). There was a complete absence of events that explicitly focused on social injustices and wrongdoing (i.e., silenced events). Participants who identified more strongly with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) were more likely to generate glorifying events focusing on dominant group experiences (e.g., Hindu-focused) in their first response, compared to events focusing on wrongdoing against subordinate groups. Study 2 exposed the events generated (in Study 1) to a new sample of participants ($N = 95$) using a within-subjects design. To make up for the relative absence of events focusing on wrongdoing, I included four additional events (i.e., silenced events) in Study 2. Results indicate that participants considered glorifying events as more relevant/important compared to critical and silenced events. National identity moderated their ratings of historical events. Participants who strongly identified with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered glorifying events as more relevant, compared to critical and silenced events. Studies 3 and 4 examined the consequences of

exposure to particular representations of history (selected from Studies 1 and 2). In Study 3 ($N = 65$) I utilized a between-subjects design and exposed participants to either glorifying events, critical events, or silenced events. Results indicate that, compared to glorifying events, critical and silenced events (i.e., those focusing on social injustices and wrongdoing) reduced national identification, and were more effective in promoting perception of injustice in present-day Indian society. Study 4 ($N = 160$) also utilized a between-subject design. I randomly assigned participants to either read critical events (same as Study 3), glorifying events focusing on independence from British colonization, glorifying events focusing on predominantly Hindu and pre-British era, or a control condition. Results indicate that participants in the critical events condition, compared to control condition and the two glorifying events conditions, reported lower national identification. The critical condition was also more effective in promoting perceptions of injustice, compared to the two glorifying conditions. Finally, there was evidence of a linear trend, suggesting that exposure to dominant group representations (i.e., Hindu-focused glorifying condition) led to lower perceptions of injustice, compared to exposure to critical events, and a baseline control condition. Together, these studies provide evidence of the bi-directional relationship between identity and memory. Discussion emphasizes the collective character of psychological experiences and its relevance to the study of injustice and oppression.

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CHAPTER 1

The Interplay Between Collective Memory and National Identity

“Forgetting... is a crucial factor in the creation of a nation...”

-Renan (1882/1990, p. 11)

“In the process of creating a memory of temple destruction in modern times, only the temples desecrated by Muslim rulers are remembered, those desecrated by Hindu rulers are forgotten.”

-Thapar (2005, p. 218)

In 2002, the national government in India proposed several changes in the history curricula through a new national curricula framework. Opponents of this proposal perceived these changes as evidence of reconstructing Indian history to make it primarily Hindu-focused (Mukherjee & Mukherjee, 2002; Sundar, 2004; Thapar, 2002; Visweswaran, Witzel, Manjrekar, Bhog, & Chakravarti, 2009). For instance, the proposal suggested the omission of any reference to eating beef, a forbidden practice for people who endorse Hinduism. Similarly, the proposal suggested that the independence or freedom movement be framed as a religious war against Muslims rather than a movement for independence from British colonization. Opponents of this proposal claimed that engagement with such accounts of the past could influence people's (particularly students') conceptions of Indian identity (e.g., being Indian means being Hindu), and promote inter-group conflict (particularly against Muslims). These changes were not implemented as this particular government lost their seat in the 2004 elections. The new

government repealed the proposal and banned the use of any textbooks that altered previous constructions of national history.

The above quotations and examples raise several issues for discussions of memory and silence. They highlight the constructed nature of silence (or forgetting). People may (re)produce silences by omitting past events (e.g., practice of eating beef or destruction of temples by Hindu rulers) or reconstructing past events (e.g., frame independence movement as a Hindu-movement versus movement against colonization). Moreover, these acts of silencing or forgetting may serve identity-relevant concerns. Opponents of the curriculum proposal suspected that Hindu-focused curricula reflected beliefs of dominant groups in India (i.e., Hindus) and accordingly portrayed the latter in a positive light. Conversely, such accounts of the past also portrayed subordinate groups (e.g., Muslims in India) in a negative light. It is also possible that acts of silences or reconstructions are associated with Indians' beliefs about Indian identity (e.g., being Indian means being Hindu). In one direction, these accounts may reflect beliefs about Hindus and Muslims in India, and the extent to which these religious groups are 'truly' Indian. In the other direction, they may also shape beliefs about being 'truly' Indian. Thus, forgetting or reconstructing past events may reflect and shape understandings of a nation as well as beliefs about the community of members who make up a nation.

Taking these examples as a point of departure, the present research applies a cultural psychological perspective to examine how representations of a national past can *reflect* national identity concerns. It also examines how representations of a national past can *promote* identity-relevant concerns (e.g., national identification, perceptions of present-day issues of injustice against minority groups).

What is a Cultural Psychological Perspective?

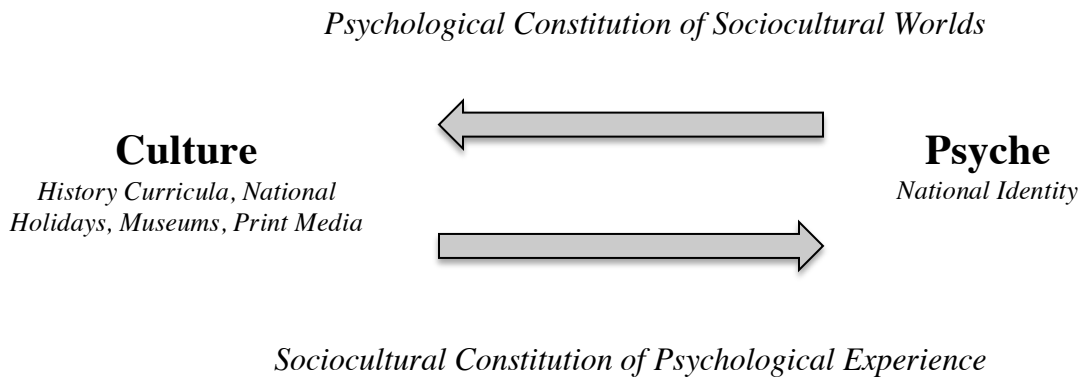
While approaches vary (see Kim, Mojaverian, & Sherman, 2012), the cultural psychology perspective that informs the current work considers psychological processes as forms of ‘mediated action’ (Penuel & Werstch, 1999). Informed by the works of Vygostky (1978) and Bakhtin (1981), the concept of mediated action involves two elements: (1) the agent or the person who is doing the acting; and (2) the cultural tools present in the environment and used by the agent to accomplish a given action (Wertsch, 2002). For instance, consider the topic of memory. People can collectively remember a national past through engagement with cultural tools (e.g., museums and history curricula). The process of remembering is thus mediated through engagement with a particular tool present in the environment, and necessarily requires interaction with a given tool. From this perspective, psychological processes are not limited to the brain architecture but also reflected in the social environment and reproduced through cultural practices and tools present in the environment. Similarly, consider the topic of national identity. A cultural psychological perspective suggests that rather than a natural connection to the nation, people construct an experience of national identity (i.e., identify with a nation and members belonging to a nation) based on an imagined community with other members who are distant in time and space. The process of imagination (of a national community) takes place through engagement with cultural tools (e.g., print media; Anderson, 1983). In this way, a cultural psychological approach is not limited to investigations of variation in psychological phenomena across cultural settings. Instead, the more fundamental point of this approach is to examine how apparently ‘natural’ expressions of human psychology (e.g., national identity) require scaffolded engagement with cultural tools (e.g., cultural practices, language) in the environment.

Rather than consider culture as a static and invariant social system, I draw upon an ecological conceptualization of culture as “explicit and implicit patterns of historically derived and selected ideas and their material manifestations in institutions, practices, and artifacts” (Adams & Markus, 2004; Adams, Salter, Pickett, Kurtiş, & Phillips, 2010). This understanding of culture focuses on residues of prior activities (e.g., history curricula) that not only reflect the beliefs and desires of the initial actors who created them but also direct future behavior and action of those who engage with them. Thus, culture is shaped by people (i.e., product of action) and also shapes people (i.e., conditioning element for future action; Adams & Markus, 2004). In this way, culture and psyche make each other in a bi-directional relationship of mutual constitution (Shweder, 1995).

Figure 1 illuminates this bi-directional relationship between culture and psyche. The top arrow in Figure 1 refers to the *psychological constitution of sociocultural worlds*: the extent to which everyday ecologies are not ‘just natural’ or do not develop out of ‘nowhere’, but are products of human action (Adams & Markus, 2004; Adams et al., 2010). From this perspective, cultural tools are products of human engagement and action, and may reflect the desires or beliefs of the people who created them.

The bottom arrow in Figure 1 reflects the *sociocultural constitution of psychological experience*: the extent to which tendencies of human experience require engagement with the social context and thereby are not ‘just natural’ or inborn (Adams & Markus, 2004; Adams et al., 2010). From this perspective, psychological experiences require engagement with cultural tools present in any given context.

Figure 1. Mutual constitution of culture and psyche



To summarize, in one direction, cultural tools shape psychological experiences and direct subsequent activity of those who engage with them. In the other direction, cultural tools are shaped by psychological perception and action, and can reflect particular desires and beliefs. Thus, psyche and culture constitute one another.

The present research applies a cultural psychological perspective to examine both aspects of the mutual constitution framework as it applies to the topic of national identity and collective memory. In one direction, and corresponding to the top arrow of Figure 1 (*psychological constitution of sociocultural worlds*), I consider how national identification influences people's recollections of a national past and their judgments of particular historical representations. In the other direction, and corresponding to the bottom arrow of Figure 1 (*sociocultural constitution of psychological experiences*), I consider how representations of history direct subsequent experiences in identity-relevant ways (e.g., engagement with particular accounts of history can influence subsequent levels of national identification). Before elaborating on these ideas, I first consider psychological research on identity, memory, and the bidirectional relationship between them.

The Study of Identity

Psychological research on the study of identity is extensive and it is beyond the scope of the present work to provide a comprehensive review. I draw upon theories and perspectives that are most relevant to the current project, and discuss the different ways in which scholars have conceptualized identity.

Personal and Social Identity

A vast majority of social-psychological work on identity rests upon the paradigm of social identity theory. This theory makes a distinction between personal and social identity and proposes that unlike personal identity, which refers to unique characteristics of the individual, social or collective identity is “that part of the self-concept of the individual, that derives from his knowledge about his membership in a social group(s), and from the value and emotional meaning that accompany this membership” (Tajfel, 1981, p. 255). Subsequent work on the social identity perspective (e.g., self-categorization theory, Turner, Hogg, Oakes, Reicher, & Wetherell, 1987; Turner, Oakes, Haslam, & McGarty, 1994) has examined how these two identities operate at two different levels of self-categorization. Personal identities are those self-categories that define individuals as unique persons and distinct from other individuals. In contrast, social (or collective) identities are those self-categories that define individuals in terms of their shared similarities with members of their group and make them distinct from members from other (out) groups (Turner et al., 1994). The general claim of social identity theory is that individuals identify with valued social categories (e.g., nation, ethnicity, gender) because they derive a positive sense of self from them.

Identity as Narratives

Without denying the contribution of this perspective (social identity theory and self-categorization theory), the present work draws more upon narrative approaches to identity (Hammack, 2008; McAdams, 1991; 2001), which put greater emphasis in the *process* of identity development. Narrative approaches make contact with social interactionist (e.g., Mead, 1934) and developmental psychological perspectives (e.g., Erikson, 1959) by highlighting the role of historical and cultural contexts in shaping identity content (e.g., shaping individual and collective identities).¹

Life-story approach. According to McAdams (2001) identity is a ‘life-story about the self... that integrates the self synchronically and diachronically’ (McAdams, 2001). In its synchronic sense, identity integrates the various roles and relationships that characterize a person’s life at a particular moment. For instance, when one is with his/her supervisor they may feel depressed, but when the same person is with his/her peers, the person may feel motivated and optimistic. Identity integrates these two interactions so the person perceives these two experiences, although different, as parts of the same self. In its diachronic sense, identity integrates various roles, beliefs etc. across time. For instance, a person used to enjoy reading about astronomy but now the person wants to be a social psychologist. Identity integrates these two beliefs (across a period of time) so that this person can consider him/herself as an organized whole. From this perspective, identity is a tool for constructing a sense of same-ness of the self. For example, in response to the question, “who am I?” one constructs a life-story or narrative about oneself. This story is the person’s identity and it integrates different experiences, beliefs,

¹ I draw upon Simon (2004) and adopt the use of the term “collective” identity in place of “social” identity and “individual” identity instead of “personal” identity to avoid the misinterpretation that personal identity as a unique component is asocial and/or an authentic representation of some private self that is abstracted from the context and reflective of a *true* personality.

roles, and relationships across time and allows the person to perceive him/herself as an organized whole. Moreover, this story also provides a sense of direction and thereby plays a crucial role in directing future thoughts and behaviors.

Identity as mediated through memory and language. Narrative approaches emphasize the process through which narratives or identities enable people to maintain a sense of continuity of oneself and construct a story about the self, thereby drawing attention to the role of memory in the process of narrative construction. People make meaning of their experiences and reconstruct their past experiences, primarily through the construction of memories (Pasupathi, 2001). Moreover this reconstruction of memories is mediated through cultural tools such as language. Language can influence the accessibility of autobiographical memories by activating associated cultural beliefs. For instance, Wang and colleagues (Wang, Shao, & Li, 2010) found that bilingual children from Hong Kong, interviewed in English provided more self-focused descriptions and memories as well as endorsed more Western values, compared to those interviewed in Chinese.

Translating past experiences (e.g., events or images) into language influences how one remembers those experiences and enables people to actively construct their memories of past experiences (Pasupathi, 2001). Consider the conversation between two people, A and B. A just tried skydiving for the first time and found the experience exciting and anxiety-provoking. She describes the experience as more exciting in a conversation with person B (as a way to justify her decision to go sky-diving). Person B shares and reflects the excitement with A. According to Pasupathi (2001), A will remember the experience of skydiving in greater detail than she would have if she had not talked about with B. Moreover, A will remember it as a more positive experience because of the way she described her experience and the way B responded to the

excitement. Accordingly, A is now likely to think of herself as someone who enjoys skydiving. Thus, her conversation with B helped shape her memory of the skydiving experience, and might influence her future decision to go skydiving. Moreover, this memory may now influence her identity: Person A might consider herself as someone who enjoys extreme sports and accordingly may join a club to meet other people who also enjoy extreme sports.

Language (via conversations as in the above example) allows people to rehearse events that can then influence the way in which these events are recalled at another point in the future. Language also allows people to share their past with others and through this develop as well as maintain shared understandings of the past (Cuc, Ozuru, Manier, & Hirst, 2006; Fivush, 2011; Fivush & Haden, 2005; McAdams, 2001). From this perspective, memories are constructed through dialogues and exchanges between an individual and his or her immediate social environment (parents, peers, significant others) as well as with interactions with macro-level factors such as official historical narratives or media representations (Bronfenbrenner, 1994; Hammack, 2008; Wang & Brockmeier, 2002). Moreover, through such acts of remembering and forgetting (or continuously reconstructing memories) people develop life-stories or narratives about themselves, which in turn guides their future experiences (McAdams, 2001; Nelson, 2003). Thus, language (as one example of a cultural tool), memory, and social interaction are all embedded within the larger cultural historical context and are all involved in the process of identity construction (Hammack, 2008).

Bi-directional Relationship between Memory and Identity

Research on the bi-directional relationship between memory and identity has been a source of much interest amongst social and cognitive psychologists (Bartlett, 1932; Greenwald, 1980; Wilson & Ross, 2003). One line of work has focused on the relationship between

individual identity (or personal identity) and autobiographical memory. Another line of work has extended discussions between individual identity and memory to discussions of collective identity (or social identity) and collective memory.

Autobiographical Memory and Individual Identity

Memory shapes identity. In one direction of this bidirectional relationship, memory shapes construction of identity. As noted earlier, through acts of remembering (and forgetting) people construct their identities. People selectively remember particular experiences and construe their past and future to construct stories or narratives that make sense to them and provide a sense of continuity of their present self (McAdams, 2001). Experimental research suggests that people's memory revisions and distancing strategies influence the effect of the remembered outcomes on their self-regard (Wilson, 2000; Wilson & Ross, 2001). For instance, Wilson and Ross (2003) found that subjective distance to particular past events moderated the impact of remembering those events on current self-evaluation. These researchers presented their participants with a timeline that either spanned many years (e.g., birth to today) or spanned a relatively recent past (e.g., age 16 to today). Participants then located and marked a target event—past event in high school that led to a positive or negative outcome—on the timeline. Wilson and Ross found that participants felt psychologically closer to the target event in the condition with a more expansive timeline (i.e., birth to today) as they were more likely to place the target event closer to “today.” More relevant to the present concern is the effect of manipulation on their current self-evaluation. Participants who were induced to feel close to their former failures (i.e., those in the expansive timeline) evaluated their current self less favorably compared to those who were induced to feel distant from their failures (i.e., those in the limited timeline). Likewise, participants evaluated themselves more favorably when induced to feel

closer to their former successes, compared to those who were induced to feel more distant to the same successes. This example suggests how memories of the past influence people's current views of themselves. Moreover, as Wilson and Ross (2003) note, the same event can have a different effect on self-evaluation depending on how close or distant one feels to that event. Thus, *what* people remember and *how* they remember a particular past event can influence their perceptions of themselves.

Identity shapes memory. In the other direction, people selectively remember (or forget) past experiences based on their current identity concerns. Previous research suggests that people's current concerns influence the content of their recollections of the past (Bartlett, 1932; Greenwald, 1980; Ross, 1989), and people remember the past in a manner that makes them feel good about themselves in the present context (Ross & Wilson, 2002; Wilson & Ross, 2001). Social psychologists have suggested that people in Western contexts (e.g., U.S.) are motivated to view their current self favorably (Baumeister, 1998; Sedikides, 1993). Accordingly, Wilson and Ross (2003) suggest that when people are motivated to view themselves in a positive light (i.e., self-enhance) they disparage their past/earlier selves. For instance, Wilson and Ross (2000) manipulated people's objective in their self-descriptions by encouraging participants to adopt the goal of evaluating themselves favorably (self-enhancement goal) or accurately (accuracy goal). Participants with a self-enhancement goal were more likely to include an inferior past self in their self-description compared to participants with an accuracy goal. By devaluating their past selves, people can create the illusion of improvement over time, and perceive their current self in a favorable manner. Thus, people's motivations for self-enhancement can influence their memories of their past experiences.

Collective Memory and Collective Identity

Social psychologists have extended the discussion of memory and identity by applying it to the collective level (i.e., collective memory and national identity; Liu & Hilton, 2005; Reicher & Hopkins, 2001). In such discussions, psychologists often use the term “collective” to make distinctions between individual-level content and group-level content of identity and memory. A cultural psychological understanding of the term collective refers to the *process* through which psychological experiences are constructed through engagement with cultural tools (e.g., history textbooks). This understanding of collective as a process suggests that regardless of content (i.e., individual or group-level), people remember past events by engaging with cultural tools. Thus, the act of remembering is collective because it involves engagement with cultural tools. I return to this point after reviewing research to illuminate the bi-directional relationship between identity and memory at the group level (i.e., collective as group).

Memory shapes identity. Just as constructions of the personal past (i.e., autobiographical memories) impact the experience of individual identity, so do constructions of the collective past (i.e., collective memories) impact collective identity-relevant experiences. Reminders of an in-group’s past can have implications for how people feel about their group membership. For instance, previous research has indicated that reminders of the Holocaust—in particular the harmful actions committed by Germans—led German participants to feel less positive about being German, compared to a control condition (Peetz, Gunn, & Wilson, 2010). In another study, the same researchers found that German participants (compared to Canadians) placed the Holocaust further back in subjective time—indicating that it felt more distant (vs. recent)—when they read about wrongdoings committed by Germans (vs. Germany’s attempts at reparation following the Holocaust). Moreover, those who distanced the harmful actions

(committed by Germans) reported higher levels of collective self-esteem (i.e., they felt more glad to be German), compared to those who placed the Holocaust closer in subjective time (Peetz, Gunn, & Wilson, 2010). Thus, reminders of the past and distancing strategies can influence the effect of remembered outcomes on collective identity.

Identity shapes memory. Similar to the biases that research has identified in personal memory, people selectively remember their group's past to meet present-day identity concerns. For example, Sahdra and Ross (2007) found that participants who strongly identified (vs. weakly identified) with their religious group recalled fewer instances in which their group perpetuated violence against another religious group. In a second study, the same researchers found that when prompted to strongly identify with their nation, Canadian participants recalled fewer incidents of historical violence in which Canada committed harm/violence against another group, compared to those who were prompted to dis-identify.

Social psychological research suggests that people may be motivated to reinterpret or silence events that reflect poorly on their in-group, and which, by extension, reflect poorly on themselves (Baumeister & Hastings, 1997). Accordingly, people may remember their past in identity-favorable ways to avoid negative feelings associated with threats to their identity (e.g., experience of collective guilt; Branscombe & Miron, 2004; Wohl, Branscombe, & Klar, 2006). This is especially likely for those who highly identify with their in-group. People who are high in collective identification, compared to low identifiers, may reduce the negative consequences of engaging with in-group transgressions by psychologically distancing themselves from them (Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997), by not acknowledging the negative impacts of in-group transgressions (Doosje, Branscombe, Spears, & Manstead, 1998), or by shifting their standards of justice so that in-group wrongdoing no longer produces negative feelings such as collective

guilt (Miron, Branscombe, & Biernat, 2010). Bilali (2012) found that American participants for whom American identity was more central to their self-concept, perceived the Pearl Harbor attacks as more important to U.S. history, and attributed more responsibility to Japan and less responsibility to the U.S. for the attacks, compared to those for whom American identity was less central to their self-concept. Thus, people can reconstruct past events in ways to maintain a positive collective identity and/or avoid threats to their identity.

As noted earlier, research on the relationship between collective identity and collective memory has typically used collective to denote group-level phenomena. The present work also considers identity and memory at the group-level as it focuses on national identity and representations of national history. However, the present work draws upon a cultural psychological perspective and considers the collective character of identity and memory. That is, it explores how identity and memory operate as forms of mediated action and involve collaborative engagement with cultural tools. I elaborate on this point in the sections below.

Representations of History: Tools for National Identity and Mediated Action

The present work considers how collective identity—or more specifically, national identity—is associated with recollections of national history, as well as how engagement with national representations of the past impacts identity. I draw upon Hammack’s (2008; 2010) approach to cultural psychology and conceptualize collective as a process and not just as a reference to group-level analysis of identity or memory (i.e., collective as group). From this perspective, identity—regardless of whether it is individual or collective—is constructed through engagement with the broader cultural context or engagement with the “master narrative” (Hammack, 2008; 2010). Hammack (2010) suggests that the Palestinian master narrative (i.e., story about Palestinian identity) primarily centers on themes of loss and dispossession, resistance

to occupation, and existential insecurity. Such themes are not only prevalent in everyday discourse in Palestinian society but also affirmed through lived experiences. For example, Palestinians in the territories have mobility restrictions that are enforced by the Israeli army. Such restrictions can lead to a lack of control in basic daily affairs and can contribute towards the theme of dispossession and insecurity. In an analysis of interviews with Palestinian youth, Hammack (2010) considered the extent to which participants' internalized the master narrative of Palestinian identity, and found that in constructing their personal narratives (i.e., life-stories about themselves), participants frequently mentioned themes of dispossession and existential insecurity. Accordingly, Hammack suggests that participants' identities involved an integration of their personal experiences with the broader narrative of Palestinian identity.

Applying this to the topic of memory, this perspective suggests that the act of remembering (or forgetting) requires engagement with broader narratives of history. Because people often do not have direct access to historical events, their knowledge of these events is mediated through engagement with representations of history such as textbooks (Lackovic, 2011; Loewen, 2007), museums (Rowe, Wertsch, & Kosyaeva, 2002; Wertsch, 2007), memorials (Hirst & Manier, 2008), and commemorative practices (Kurtiş, Adams, & Yellow Bird, 2010). People learn to remember certain events in a national past, and learn not to remember certain events, as they continuously engage with particular representations of history. These representations are in turn the products of prior action, and may also be associated with psychological characteristics of the original actors who produced the representations (e.g., intentions and motivations of the people who design and construct a museum space). The act of remembering (or forgetting) past events can then be a collaborative process and be mediated through engagement with (psychologically constituted) representations of the past. The current

project considers the collective nature of memory and identity as it refers to the group-level (as in social identity theory and the related self-categorization theory) as well as the process through which people engage with psychologically constituted representations of history.

Historical Representations Shape Identity-Relevant Experiences

One form of cultural tool for shaping national identity is national holidays and especially the practices of commemoration—the act of “remembering together”—associated with these holidays (Etzioni, 2004). For instance, Kurtiş and colleagues (2010) found that commemorations of Thanksgiving in the U.S—presidential Thanksgiving proclamations between the years 1993 and 2008—failed to mention genocide. These researchers then investigated the impact of Thanksgiving representations on national identification, and found that exposure to celebratory representations of Thanksgiving that omitted any mention of historical instances of injustice (i.e., genocide) led to an increase in participants’ beliefs about national superiority, compared to representations that presented more critical accounts of Thanksgiving and acknowledged genocide. This suggests that highlighting certain aspects of a historical event can influence people’s beliefs about a national community.

By influencing national beliefs, historical representations can also play a role in reproducing narratives of conflict within a nation as well as conflict between nations. In an analysis of textbooks in Jewish schools in Israel, from the mid-1950s to mid-1990s, Bar-Tal (1999) found that most textbooks presented negative stereotypes of Arabs. Bar-Tal suggests that such negative stereotypes can maintain an Anti-Arab discourse in Israel and may contribute towards discriminatory forms of action. Extending this line of work, Al-Haj’s (2005) analysis of the revised textbooks, introduced in schools post 1999, indicates no mention of Arab

experiences, possibly resulting in a removal of Arab citizens from the imagination of the Israeli community.

Besides “removing” groups of people from a national community (e.g., by not mentioning Arab experiences in history textbooks), representations of history may also have implications for how people respond to past and present-day issues of injustice. Responses to these issues in turn can influence the extent to which individuals support or oppose the allocation of resources aimed at making amends for historical grievances (Sibley, Liu, Duckitt, & Khan 2008). For instance, Salter (2010) found that mainstream Black history representations—that focused on issues of diversity and failed to mention historical barriers and injustices—were more prevalent in majority-White schools, compared to majority-Black schools. In contrast, majority-Black schools tended to showcase more critical accounts of Black history that drew attention to historical injustices and inequalities. Salter (2010) found that exposure to historical representations that emphasize racial barriers faced by Black Americans led White American participants to perceive a greater influence of current-day racism in American society, and endorse greater support for anti-racism policies, compared to representations that emphasized celebratory achievements of particular individuals (i.e., mainstream representations).

To summarize, the above examples suggest how engagement with particular historical representations—proclamations for national holidays or Black history representations—can influence experience of national identity and identity-relevant action (e.g., perception of injustice, support for policy).

Historical Representations Reflect Identity-Relevant Concerns

Representations of history (e.g., proclamations for national holidays) are also reflective of identity-concerns. They are products of human action, and may be associated with particular

desires and beliefs. Consider again the example of Thanksgiving proclamations in the U.S. Kurtiş and colleagues (2010) found that participants who score high (vs. low) on a measure of national glorification indicated a preference for celebratory representations of Thanksgiving (no mention of genocide) compared to ones that highlighted historical injustice (e.g., genocide). Similarly, Salter (2010) considered how mainstream Black history representations (prevalent in majority-White schools) reflect the preferences of White Americans. When exposed to Black history representations—mainstream celebratory representations as well as those highlighting historical injustice—White American participants reported more positive affect, and indicated a greater preference for celebratory representations, compared to representations of historical barriers and injustice. Moreover, the abovementioned effects were most evident among participants who strongly identified as being White American (compared to low identifiers). Together, the two research examples suggest that preferences for cultural products are aligned with identity-relevant beliefs (e.g., nation glorifying beliefs) present in these representations.

To summarize, a cultural psychological perspective considers psychological processes as well as historical representations as forms of mediated action. It considers how the process of remembering (or forgetting) particular aspects of a national past is mediated through engagement with cultural tools that include representations of history. These tools are not inert end products but reflect particular identity concerns (e.g., national glorification) and promote particular ends consistent with these identity concerns.

Overview of Present Research

The present work extends prior research on historical representations and national identity in three ways. First, it examines how historical representations operate as tools for mediated action. Second, it draws upon a technique from work in cultural psychology—situation

sampling—that previous researchers have developed to study the mutual constitution process and applies it to the study of historical representations as mediated action. Third, it extends research beyond North American settings to consider the Indian context. I expand on these points in the sections below.

Historical representations as mediated action

Previous research on representations of history as tools for mediated action has tended to use existing cultural products that the investigator selects (e.g., Kurtiş et al, 2010). The examination of existing cultural products (e.g., Thanksgiving proclamations) is important to understand the extent to which such products can reflect as well as promote particular psychological experiences. However, they do not explicitly illuminate the notion of mediated action. More specifically, they do not consider how psychological experiences (e.g., identity-relevant concerns) are associated with the construction of historical representations, and how these representations in turn promote particular psychological experiences that correspond with that of the original actors/producers. In the analysis of the existing products, it is difficult to examine the psychological characteristics of the people who created the existing products (e.g., strength of national identity). The present work considers how people recall particular representations of history and how engagement with the content of these recollections (as well as engagement with representations that are absent from recollections) impacts psychological experiences (e.g., national identification) of a subsequent group of participants. The present work also considers the extent to which the psychological characteristics of the producers (i.e., people who generated historical representations) correspond with selection judgments of those who are exposed to the generated set of historical representations.

Methodology: Situation Sampling

I draw upon the method of situation sampling to examine how the production of psychologically constituted cultural tools (i.e., representations of history that people recollect and forget) shapes psychological experiences of those who engage with these tools (i.e., a novel group of participants who interact with historical representations). Kitayama and his colleagues (Kitayama, Markus, Matsumoto, & Norasakkunkit, 1997; Morling, Kitayama, & Miyamoto, 2002) developed the situation sampling method to examine how psychological tendencies and processes are historically constructed and embedded in everyday practices. The method consists of two steps. In Step 1, participants generate a set of scenarios or events. Depending on the purpose of the study, these can be historical events (as in the present project) or events that are associated with particular psychological experiences (e.g., scenarios in which participants feel that they influenced—versus adapted to—their social circumstance). Step 2 involves the exposure of the events generated in Step 1 to a new sample of participants to examine the extent to which the events are associated with particular psychological tendencies that correspond to the original sample of participants (from Step 1).

In one application of this method, researchers (Morling et al., 2002) examined how tendencies to influence (behavior prototypical of a U.S. context) and adjust to (behavior prototypical of a Japanese context) one's environment are sustained through social practices and situations. In Study 1, the researchers asked American and Japanese participants to describe situations in which they influenced, or adjusted to, their social or situational circumstances (Step 1 of situation sampling method: generation of situations). Their results indicated that American participants listed more influence situations compared to adjustment situations, while Japanese participants listed more adjustment situations compared to influence situations. In Study 2,

researchers exposed a random sample of the situations generated from Study 1 to a new group of American and Japanese participants (Step 2 of situation sampling method: Evaluating the impact of exposure of situations on psychological tendencies). Participants read each situation and estimated their experience of (i) efficacy, power, or competence to assess experiences of influence, and (ii) feelings of closeness, merging or interpersonal relatedness to assess experiences of adjustment. Results indicated that (i) American influence situations were associated with greater experiences of efficacy and influence compared to the Japanese influence situations, and (ii) Japanese adjustment situations were associated with greater experiences of relatedness than American adjustment situations. Results also indicated that American participants reported strong feelings of efficacy in influence situations (generated across both settings) and Japanese participants reported strong feelings of relatedness in adjustment situations (generated across both settings).

Through the situation sampling method, Morling, Kitayama, and colleagues (e.g., Morling et al., 2002) suggest that participants from Japan and U.S. reveal contextually attuned psychological characteristics (e.g., experiences of influence and adjustment) that reflect the situations and practices emphasized in each context. An implication of this is that psychological characteristics cannot be considered as abstracted from any given context. Instead they are mediated through cultural tools and practices present in the environment (Vygotsky, 1978).

The present work adapts the situation sampling method to the topic of collective memory. Instead of considering historical representations or situations from two different contexts, it focuses on different *types* of historical representations in India (e.g., ones that reflect celebratory achievements versus social injustices), and examines how they are associated with psychological tendencies (e.g., national identification). The current work also considers how different

representations (or situations) promote particular psychological tendencies. I test this by using a between-subject design, and examine whether exposure to particular representations influence identity-relevant outcomes.

To conduct the first step of the situation sampling method, I asked participants to generate historical events that they considered important and relevant to the study of Indian history (Study 1). Of particular interest was to make distinctions between *type* of event: I focused on the extent to which participants recalled celebratory and nation-glorifying events versus critical events that highlighted issues of historical injustice and wrongdoing. I then examined whether national identification influenced the differential recall of events (glorifying versus critical; i.e., how memories reflect identity-relevant concerns). To conduct the second step of the situation sampling method, I exposed the historical events generated in Step 1 to a new set of participants in a within-subjects design (Study 2). I first examined participants' selection judgments (measured in terms of relevance and importance ratings) for the different types of events (e.g., glorifying versus those that focus on injustice and wrongdoing), and then examined if national identification moderated their reactions towards the events. Together, studies 1 and 2 examined the extent to which recollections of a national past, and engagement with particular accounts of the past are associated with national identity concerns. I extended previous applications of the situation sampling method by also examining how particular representations—which participants from Study 1 generated and therefore are products of prior action—promote identity-relevant experiences. Accordingly, Studies 3 and 4 involved a between-subject design. I exposed participants to particular accounts of the past (generated in Study 1), and then examined whether this exposure impacted participants' national identification, as well as their reactions towards present-day issues of injustice. Together, the four studies

consider how imaginations of a national past reflect identity concerns and impact people's national identity and identity-relevant outcomes. Moreover, the project examines how in one direction, historical representations are products of human action and reflect national identity concerns. In the other direction, historical representations are not inert end products, but direct experiences towards particular ends (e.g., impact national identity and perceptions of present-day injustice).

Overview of the Indian Context

Before the arrival of the British, the Indian sub-continent consisted of almost 560 states or territories of various sizes, organized under the rule of various empires. Each region had distinct languages, traditions, and rituals that served as potential dimensions of cultural difference. The legacy of these distinctions persists in the religious and linguistic diversity that characterizes the present-day nation-state of India. Currently, the government of India recognizes twenty-two languages. Each language is associated with a distinct set of traditions and rituals. For example, people in the state of Tamil Nadu primarily speak Tamil and have their distinct set of cuisine, attire, and traditions (e.g., strong Hindu influences in dance and architecture). In contrast, the neighboring state of Kerala has a different language—Malayalam—along with a different set of cuisines, traditions, and political influences (e.g., a history of electing communist forms of government) that distinguish it from Tamil Nadu and other Indian states. Moreover, many of the states in India (e.g., Kerala) are also internally heterogeneous (e.g., sub-caste, religious sects).

The arrival of British in the early 18th century, reinforced many of these regional differences, as British rule was primarily based on the philosophy of “Divide and Rule.” Rather than build a pan-Indian identity (which could result in collective action and overthrow British

rule), British colonizers emphasized the differences between the various regions, and in doing so contributed to conflict between the various regions. Accordingly, one of the primary tasks for activists in the independence/freedom movement was to scaffold a sense of collective belonging with the colonized land (i.e., the sub-continent) and develop a common identity amongst the colonized individuals. For instance, some of the events associated with the freedom movement encouraged the rejection of British goods and use of local products as a way to support local (versus British) economies. The common identity was thus based on the notion of common duties and responsibilities that could potentially serve the interests of those colonized versus the interests of the British rulers. The freedom movement culminated with the departure of the British and partition of the sub-continent into what are now India, Pakistan, and Bangladesh. The basis for partition was religion: Political leaders from the Indian sub-continent proposed the separation of India from Pakistan (west of India) and Bangladesh (east of India) as they considered India as a predominantly Hindu-occupied region compared to the Islam-occupied regions of Pakistan and Bangladesh.

When India gained independence, political leaders and framers of the constitution attempted to develop a framework that would provide for a unified (and equal) but diverse nation. For instance, instead of selecting one language as the official language of India, they considered twenty-two official languages. However, India continued to be a Hindu (and Aryan) dominated society that denies a large number of minority communities (e.g., lower castes, people from North Eastern India, Muslims, rural communities) access to social and economic resources (Banerjee, Iyer, & Somanathan, 2005; Sen, 2005). Upper caste Hindus continue to have greater access to higher education and occupy positions of power in government and private

organizations (Deshpande, 2006). This inequality is also reflected in discussions of Indian history.

Scholars have suggested that representations of Indian history (e.g., history curricula) do not equally reflect all Indians' experiences. Instead, historical representations primarily focus on experiences of dominant and elite group members (e.g., upper caste Hindu men; Guha, 1982; Sen, 2005; Sundar, 2004). For instance, Sundar (2004) notes that many history textbooks portray Indian civilization as Hinduism-focused by using the phrase "Vedic civilization".² In a textbook on medieval India, Sundar notes that Muslim rulers are portrayed in anti-Hindu terms and their contributions to society are largely ignored. Similarly, in a preliminary analysis of standardized history exams, I observed that the exams have more instances of elite achievements (e.g., descriptions of activists who are often Hindu, upper caste men) than achievements of marginalized group members (e.g., activists who bring attention to disparities within marginalized communities; Mukherjee, 2014).

In the current project, I draw upon a cultural psychological perspective to examine the extent to which representations of history serve as tools for mediated action in the Indian context. In one direction, and corresponding to the top arrow of Figure 1, I examine how constructions of a national past (in terms of nation-glorifying achievements or critical shortcomings) *reflect* strength of national identification. In the other direction, and corresponding to the bottom arrow of Figure 1, I examine how constructions of a national past influence national identification as well as tendencies to recognize (or deny) current issues of injustice.

² The Vedas are the oldest scriptures of Hinduism and also associated with the origin of the caste system in India.

CHAPTER 2

Psychological Constitution of Sociocultural Worlds

Studies 1 and 2 examined one direction of the mutual constitution model: *the psychological constitution of socio-cultural worlds*. Specifically, these studies examined whether constructions of the past (in terms of nation-glorifying achievements or critical shortcomings) *reflect* experience of national identification. The studies investigate how people vary in their engagement with representations of the past (representations that reflect celebratory themes versus representations focusing on collective wrongdoing and historical injustice) and how this variation is associated with national identification. I operationalized engagement as recall of historical events (Study 1) and as judgments of relevance and importance for the study of Indian history (Study 2).

Study 1

Study 1 was the first step of the situation sampling method. Participants generated three historical events that they considered as most relevant and important to the study of Indian history. After they listed these events, they completed a measure of national identification. To the extent that dominant constructions of the past (i.e., events that reflect majority group experiences) reflect celebratory achievements and silence issues of wrongdoing and historical injustice, one can anticipate that these constructions will be more prominent in mainstream discourse (e.g., history curricula) and more available to inform participant recall. Accordingly, one can hypothesize that participants may recall more glorifying events (i.e., celebratory achievements) compared to events that emphasize issues of historical injustice and wrongdoing, which are relatively less emphasized in mainstream discourse. At the same time, tendencies to recall glorifying events are not uniformly or randomly distributed across people in a particular

setting. Instead, the *identity-relevance hypothesis* suggests that tendencies to recall more glorifying events will be most evident among participants who strongly identify with being Indian (vs. low identifiers).

Method

Participants

A total of 55 undergraduate students (40 female; 5 unknown) from a college in western India participated in Study 1. They ranged in age from 18 to 22 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 19.34$, $SD = 0.90$). A majority of the participants (69%) reported family annual income; an analysis of their responses suggests that, on average, participants had a middle class or an upper middle class background.³

Procedure

Participants completed a paper and pencil questionnaire. They first listed three events that they considered as relevant and important to the study of Indian history. In particular, the instructions directed them as follows (with boldface and capitalization as they appeared in the original text):

Imagine that you were writing the contents of a history textbook for students.

Think about the **THREE** most **important and relevant historical events** that took place in India. These are the three events that **you think all students SHOULD know about.**

³ The survey also included measures of caste and religious identification, but a majority of the participants did not complete them. Of the participants who did respond to these measures, a majority indicated Hindu religion and an upper caste (Brahmin or Kshatriya) identity. Inclusion of demographic variables such as income, caste, religious identification, and gender as covariates did not change results (across all four studies). I report results of analysis (for all four studies) without inclusion of covariates.

After listing historical events, participants completed a measure of national identification and a demographics section. Participants across all four studies responded to the research materials in the English language.

Measure

National identification. To assess the identity-relevance hypothesis, participants responded to four items on national identification using a 7-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). These items were selected from a measure on group identification (Leach et al., 2008). Two of these items were from the solidarity sub-scale (“I feel committed to Indians”, “I feel a bond with Indians”) and two items were from the affective sub-scale (“I am glad to be Indian”, “I think Indians have a lot to be proud of”). An exploratory factor analysis (using maximum likelihood and promax rotation) indicated the presence of one factor. Accordingly, I averaged across all four items to form an index of national identification ($\alpha = .72$).

Demographics. Participants responded to two open-ended questions that instructed them to list (i) their caste identification, and (ii) their religious identification.

Results and Discussion

To assess the extent to which recall of events reflected particular themes (e.g., glorifying events that emphasize celebratory achievements), two coders assessed the content of each response. Next, I examined the extent to which national identification predicted recall of events.

Coding of Historical Events

Two undergraduate students from India, who were blind to the hypotheses of the study, served as coders. They used binary coding (i.e., *yes* or *no*) to indicate whether each event could be classified as one of three types of events. Critical events were those that coders considered as

focusing on historical injustice and that may make people (in general) feel ashamed or sad about being Indian (e.g., riots between Hindus and Muslims). Glorifying events were those that coders considered as focusing on national achievements and that may make people (in general) feel proud or happy about being Indian (e.g., events related to the freedom struggle in India). Finally, neutral events were those that coders considered ambiguous and that may not make people feel either proud or ashamed of being Indian (e.g., Second World War). There was perfect consensus between raters in the way they coded the themes for each event. See Table 1 for a list of events and their frequencies.

Table 1.
List of events generated in Study 1.

Historical Events	Frequency
Glorifying events	Total $f=92$
Freedom Struggle/Movement	31
First war of Independence: War of 1857	12
Dandi March	11
Development of Indian Constitution	7
Maratha Rule	6
Civil Disobedience Movement	5
Gandhi's movement	2
Indus Valley Civilization	2
Gupta Period	2
Non- Cooperation Movement	2
Budha gaining enlightenment	1
Kargil War	1
Indo-Pak War	1
Revolution	1
India's ancient and current contributions to the field of knowledge	1
Bhakti Movement	1
Formation of states by Vallabhai Patel	1
Savarkar's history	1
Abolishment of child marriage and sati	1
Women education	1
White Revolution/Green Revolution- 1990 new economic policy	1
Reform of Indian economy	1

Critical events	Total $f = 11$
Mahatma Gandhi Assassination	3
Demolition of Babri Masjid	2
Godhra Riots	1
Indira Gandhi Assassination	1
Rajiv Gandhi Assassination	1
Death of Sir Henry Lawrence	1
Invasion of Delhi by foreigners	1
Take over by British	1

Neutral events	Total $f = 54$
Mughal Empire	18
Partition	12
Jallianwala Bagh Incident	5
Establishment of Railways by British	3
First and Second World Wars	3
Congress Rule	3
Paniput Battles	2
East India Company and Trading	2
Aryan Debate	1
Anti-Corruption	1
British rule in India - Mahatma Gandhi	1
India's economic and political history since independence	1
Mumbai bomb blasts	1
Alexander's time	1
Hemu's downfall	1
Mughals and Marathas rule	1
Pre-colonization by the British- Mughal	1

Glorifying events. Analysis revealed that a majority of the glorifying events was associated with the *freedom movement* that resulted in Indian independence from British colonization. Some instances simply referred to “Freedom Movement” ($f = 31$). Other instances referred to specific events such as the Dandi March of 1930 ($f = 11$), which was an action of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly in colonial India.

Besides events associated with the struggle for independence from the British, a few instances of glorifying events referred to timelines prior to colonization. One example was a

reference to early Indus Valley settlements ($f = 2$). Other examples included references to the “golden age” of Hindu cultural production (the Gupta period; $f = 2$) or the revival of Hinduism after the Mughal (predominantly Islamic) period (e.g., Maratha Empire, $f = 6$).

Finally, it is important to mention some noteworthy silences, especially ones that focus on celebratory events/periods of history that are not Hinduism-focused. For example, there were no references to celebratory events within the Islamic rule (e.g., the construction of the Taj Mahal, a defining symbol of Indian identity). Similarly there was only one reference to Buddhism and no references to Jainism and Sikhism. All three religions also arose and developed within the Indian sub-continent (as in the case of Hinduism), and can be conceptualized as glorifying events that reflect national milestones.

Critical events. The critical events mostly focused on *assassination of leaders*. One instance was the assassination of Indira Gandhi, who died in 1984 at the hands of two Sikh bodyguards. The assassination occurred in the aftermath of Operation Blue Star, the assault by the Indian army on the Golden Temple in Amritsar (a Sikh holy site) that left the temple heavily damaged. Another instance was the assassination of former Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, who died in 1991 at the hands of individuals belonging to the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Aelam (LTTE), a Sri Lankan separatist organization. At the time of the assassination, the Indian government had just ended their involvement in the Sri Lankan Civil War (fought between the Sri Lankan government and the LTTE). Finally, the third instance was the assassination of Mahatma Gandhi who died in 1948, at the hands of Nathuram Godse. Godse was affiliated with Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS), a Hindu nationalist group that continues to exist in present-day Indian society.

Although coders judged these assassinations to be critical events, it is important to note that the events do not explicitly refer to incidents of collective wrongdoing and social injustice. For instance, participants who mentioned the assassination of Indira Gandhi did not mention the incidents of potential collective wrongdoing—specifically, the assault on the Golden Temple—that preceded the assassination. Similarly, participants who mentioned the assassinations of Rajiv Gandhi and Mahatma Gandhi did not mention India’s involvement in the Sri Lankan civil war, or the involvement of the Hindu fundamentalist group (i.e., RSS) that continues to play an active role in Indian society. The latter omission (i.e., involvement of RSS) is especially noteworthy as such fundamentalist groups have been associated with several incidents of collective wrongdoing, especially against religious minority groups. For instance, the RSS was against Mahatma Gandhi as they considered him too tolerant towards Muslims. The organization has also been associated with other events of wrongdoing such as the destruction of the Babri Masjid Mosque (a Muslim holy site) and riots against Muslims and Christians in India.

To summarize, references to assassinations of national leaders failed to include aspects that reflected social injustice and wrongdoing. These patterns of omissions suggest the possibility that participants may have experienced these assassinations as forms of collective victimization (see Vollhardt, 2012) and constructed these events as practices of wrongdoing from others (e.g., Sikh individuals who assassinated the Prime Minister) instead of constructing events as forms of wrongdoing towards marginalized groups (e.g., destruction of Sikh holy site). In the case of Mahatma Gandhi’s assassination, participants focused on how he was assassinated by a particular individual (i.e., Godse) and failed to mention the role of the Hindu-fundamentalist group (RSS) in the assassination. The individual focus may reflect a sanitized account of the assassination as the emphasis is on wrongdoing from an individual rather than wrongdoing from

a religious majority group. The majority group (i.e., RSS) may be more difficult to construct as the “other,” compared to religious minority groups (i.e., Sikhs) or international groups (e.g., LTTE). Accordingly, participants may have experienced Mahatma Gandhi’s assassination as a form of victimization against an aberrant individual rather than against a Hindu-focused group.

In general, participants recalled very few instances of collective wrongdoing ($f = 3$). All of these instances referred to cases of *communal (religious) riots* between Hindus and Muslims. For example, two participants recalled the demolition of the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, which groups of Hindu militants (including the RSS) destroyed in 1992 to reclaim a Hindu holy site (i.e., Ram Janmabhoomi). Another participant recalled the Godhra Riots, a three-day period of violence between Hindus and Muslims. Although these riots resulted in the displacement and killings of both Hindus and Muslims, they were primarily targeted towards Muslims in India. Accordingly some scholars have referred to these events as forms of “ethnic cleansing” (McLane, 2010). These events constitute instances of collective wrongdoing and injustice to the extent that they involved violence against religious minorities; however, even in these instances where participants recalled events with features of collective wrongdoing, they did not explicitly mention or elaborate on those features.

Neutral events. The neutral-themed events mostly referred to either the partition of India and Pakistan ($f = 12$) or the Mughal Dynasty (the predominantly Islamic period predating the arrival of the British; $f = 18$). Both categories of events (i.e., partition and Islamic period) can either be conceptualized as nation glorifying or a product of social injustice. For instance, partition can be associated with independence from British colonization and reflect the successful outcome of the freedom movement. However, it can also be associated with riots between Hindus and Muslims and the forced displacement of Muslims to Pakistan. Accordingly,

it can be associated with historical injustice against religious minority groups (in this case, Muslims in India). Likewise, the Mughal Dynasty can be associated with the construction of the Taj Mahal (a celebratory event) or be considered as a period of Islamic “invasion” of Hindu culture, and accordingly be anti-glorifying because of its anti-Hindu focus. None of the participants expanded on the themes and just stated “Mughal Empire” or “Partition of India” in their responses. Accordingly, coders found these brief descriptions ambiguous (neither glorifying nor critical) and categorized them as neutral-themed events.

To investigate how participants varied in their engagement with different historical representations, I first examined the frequency of themes generated by participants. There were not enough events to empirically examine the variation in frequency of sub-themes (e.g., critical events that focus on assassination versus those that focus on collective wrongdoing and social injustice). Instead, I analyzed data in terms of frequency of overarching themes: glorifying, critical, and neutral. I return to the consideration of subthemes in Study 2.

Analysis of Event Types and Association with National Identity

Participants more readily recalled events that coders classified as nation glorifying ($f = 92$) compared to events that coders classified as critical ($f = 11$). Alternatively stated, whereas 87.3% of participants recalled *at least one* nation-glorifying event, only 12.7% of participants recalled *at least one* critical event. On average, participants recalled a significantly greater number of glorifying events ($M = 1.70$, $SD = .88$) compared to critical events ($M = 0.17$, $SD = .51$; $F(1, 53) = 87.32$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .62$). These results provide support for the first hypothesis regarding a nation-glorifying bias in recall of the collective past. Participants readily recalled far more glorifying events compared to critical events. Moreover, even in the recall of critical

events, participants did not explicitly indicate aspects of events that focused on wrongdoing (e.g., destruction of Sikh holy site prior to the assassination of Indira Gandhi).

In order to examine how national identification is related to recall of events (i.e., identity-relevance hypothesis), I created a continuous scale ranging from -2 to +2 for each response, so that each participant had a score for each of the three events that s/he listed in response to instructions. The valence of scores on this scale indicated the degree to which events were glorifying (corresponding to positive numbers) or critical (corresponding to negative numbers). Higher or more positive numbers indicated that an event was nation glorifying and focused on dominant group experiences. For instance, events that referred to the revival of Hinduism after the Islamic empire—thereby, reflecting dominant group experiences and achievements—received a score of 2, while events that referred to the freedom movement—celebratory events that do not focus on dominant group experiences—received a score of 1. Lower or more negative numbers indicated that an event was more critical (i.e., focused on wrongdoing and social injustice). For instance, events that referred to wrongdoing against minority group members (e.g., Muslims) received a score of -2, while events referring to the assassination of national leaders received a score of -1.

I then conducted a series of regression analyses with national identification as predictor and event score for each response. Results indicated that national identification was associated with recall of more glorifying events, $\beta = .27$, $p = .046$, but only for the first response. Participants who strongly identified with being Indian recalled more glorifying events (compared to critical) for their first response. National identification was unrelated to event score in their second and third responses, $ps > .19$. Next, I averaged across all three responses to create a composite score of recall type. Results from regression analysis suggest no association between

national identification and this composite score, $p = .23$. Thus, participants' overall event scores were unrelated to their national identification.

Why is identification associated with participants' first response and unrelated to their second, third, and overall responses? The free-recall task provided an indication of the accessibility of memories. Previous research on memory processes suggest that the more one thinks about the target information the more memory is accessible (i.e., readily retrieved; Schacter, 1996; 1999). Accordingly, it is possible that the first response served as a measure of recall of information that was most accessible and retrievable (and perhaps the quickest response), and most associated with identity-relevant concerns. In contrast, the second and third responses may have tapped into memories that are less retrievable and accessible (and perhaps require more deliberative and controlled thought) and less associated with identity-concerns. The analysis of order of responses and accessibility of memories remains a consideration for future research.

Summary

To summarize, participants recalled more nation-glorifying events compared to critical events. Perhaps, one of the most interesting results of the present study concerns not only the events that participants mentioned as important for Indian history, but also the events that they failed to mention. For instance, in their recall of nation-glorifying events, participants failed to mention events that reflected national achievements associated with subordinate groups (e.g., construction of Taj Mahal during Islamic period). Likewise, in their recall of critical events, participants generally omitted references to collective wrongdoing and social injustices against subordinate groups. For instance, participants who mentioned the assassination of a former Prime

Minister failed to mention how the government (associated with the assassinated Prime Minister) attacked the holy site of a religious minority group in India.⁴

A particularly important set of silences concerns instances of collective wrongdoing and perpetration of injustice against oppressed minority groups (e.g., lower caste, tribal groups, Northeastern communities). The precise character of these silences remains unclear. Do participants fail to mention incidents of wrongdoing because they are relatively unaware of them (e.g., lack of knowledge) or because they suppress mention of them (e.g., because they consider them irrelevant)? Is participants' failure to mention incidents of wrongdoing a function of their relatively privileged, dominant identity positions that make them either less aware or more willing to deny/ silence incidents of wrongdoing? If so, then another sample of participants (e.g., those belonging to lower castes) may generate a different, less glorifying, set of events that reflect their marginalized identity position. However, the sample of situations (or events generated) that participants reported roughly corresponds to the content of history curricula in India (Mukherjee, 2014). If participants' responses to prompts of the current study reflect engagement with mainstream historical narratives that are prevalent (and therefore more accessible) in the history curricula, then people from marginalized communities may also generate a similar set of events as in the present study. In the absence of another sample of participants with a different set of identity concerns, it is difficult to ascertain the extent to which the events generated in Study 1 are unique to their individual concerns about collective (i.e., national) identity or whether they reflect collective processes of engagement with mainstream historical narratives. I elaborate on this particular point in the general discussion section.

⁴ It is possible that the failure to expand on events was a result of the questionnaire format that provided limited space to write their responses, compared to open-ended interviews that may allow participants to provide more elaborate responses. I address this methodological point in the general discussion section (Chapter 4).

Study 1 also provides partial evidence for the identity-relevance of collective memory. Participants tended to recall events that bear nation-glorifying content, and the nation-glorifying content of their first responses to the prompt tended to correspond with their reported experience of national identification. On one hand participants who identified strongly with being Indian (compared to low identifiers) may have been motivated to recall events that presented their nation in a positive light (i.e., nation-glorifying events). However, if that was the case, one might expect the pattern to hold across all three responses. Results from the study indicated that identification was associated with only their first responses, suggesting that the most accessible and retrievable information (or the first thing that comes to a person's mind) is the one that is more associated with identity-relevant concerns. Events focusing on assassinations and wrongdoings may have been more schema inconsistent for those who highly identified with India (compared to low identifiers) and thereby less easily accessible or less easily retrievable in memory. As noted earlier, the analysis of response order and its implications for identity-relevance and accessibility in memory remains a consideration for future research. Accordingly, I do not discuss it further in the present document. Study 2 also examined the extent which national identification is associated with preferential selections of particular historical representations. Therefore, it served as another way to test the identity-relevance hypothesis (for which Study 1 found only partial support).

In Study 2, I investigated whether the historical events that participants generated in Study 1 are associated with similar identity concerns among a new sample of participants. Moreover, Study 2 also included additional items (that I generated) specifically focusing on collective wrongdoing and social injustice.

Study 2

In Study 2, I exposed people to items generated from Study 1 to investigate whether these items are related to identity concerns (as in Study 1) in a new sample of participants. Study 2 involved a within-subjects design in which I exposed participants to glorifying, critical, and silenced events.⁵

As in the first study, nation-glorifying events focused on the freedom movement (e.g., Dandi/Salt March) as well as on pre-British and Hindu-focused era (e.g., golden age of the Gupta Period). Critical events focused on assassination of national leaders (e.g., assassination of Indira Gandhi) as well as events that reflected wrongdoing (e.g., demolition of Babri mosque). However, since participants from Study 1 only provided brief descriptions of events (e.g., they merely listed “Dandi March” and did not indicate what that event represented), I provided a two-sentence description of each event (see Appendix A). Moreover, because participants from Study 1 did not generate many events that emphasized collective wrongdoing or instances of oppression that focused on marginalized communities (e.g., lower caste communities), I included four additional events to reflect these *silenced* representations. Two of these items focused on events reflecting the removal of land ownership rights (by British and Indian government) amongst (i) Dalits (lower caste group) and (ii) tribal groups in Northeastern India. As a result of such actions, these communities lost their source of livelihood and opportunities for upward class mobility. The remaining two items focused on events that were associated with government actions that suppressed outcries of oppression through use of militaristic forces. For instance, one

⁵In addition to glorifying, critical, and silenced events, I also exposed participants to four neutral events. National identification was not associated with differential engagement with these themes (i.e., variation in judgments of relevance and importance between themes). Since the primary focus of the project is to examine how nation-glorifying events versus those that focus on historical injustice (i.e. critical and silenced events) are associated with identity-relevant concerns, I present data for only these events in Study 2. Therefore, in the interest of maintaining a coherent focus, I do not discuss the results for neutral events.

event focused on the assassination, allegedly by the Indian armed forces, of a human rights activist from the conflicted area in Kashmir. Another event focused on the Armed Force Special Protection Act of 1958. This policy gave (and continues to give) the Indian armed forces the right to question and detain anyone whom they consider as threats to the nation. This policy has been implemented in conflict driven areas of Kashmir (predominantly Muslim occupied region) and in Northeastern India (predominantly occupied by tribal groups and lower caste groups), consequently targeting subordinate group members (e.g., Muslims, tribal and lower caste groups, northeastern communities) who reside in these areas.

Study 2 investigated the extent to which people varied in their engagement with these three types of events (glorifying, critical, and silenced) and how this variation was associated with their national identification. In this study, I operationalized engagement in terms of importance and relevance judgments.

Method

Participants

Participants included 95 adult users (34 women) of Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk program, who participated in exchange for \$1.00 credited to their Amazon account. All participants were born and currently lived in India. They ranged in age from 21 years to 66 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 33.18$, $SD = 10.69$).

MTurk is an online program developed by Amazon in which tasks are outsourced to “workers” for payment. MTurk samples are typically demographically diverse and produce data as reliable as those obtained in a typical laboratory setting (Buhrmester, Kwang, & Gosling, 2011). Demographic surveys indicate that a majority of MTurk workers are from the U.S. and India (Paolacci, Chandler, & Ipeirotis, 2010). Workers tend to be younger (about 30 years old),

overeducated, less religious, and more liberal than the general population (Berinsky, Huber, & Lenz, 2012; Paolacci et al., 2010; Shapiro, Chandler, & Mueller, 2013). Thus, while MTurk works tend to be more diverse than college student samples, they are not representative of the population that they are drawn from (Paolacci & Chandler, 2014).

Procedure

After logging into Amazon Mechanical Turk and providing informed consent, participants were presented with a series of historical events from different categories (ten glorifying, five critical, and four silenced) that occurred in India. They rated each event on (i) relevance and (ii) importance to the study of Indian history. I manually randomized the order of the events and then presented these events in the same order to all participants. After reading and rating each event, participants completed measures of national identification. Finally, they completed the same demographic measures as in Study 1.

Event Ratings. To examine the differences between the various types of events, I tested two planned comparisons. The first comparison compared glorifying ratings to the mean critical and silenced ratings. This comparison evaluated whether nation-glorifying events are considered more important/relevant compared to events focusing on injustice and wrongdoing (critical and silenced). This comparison also served as a method to test for the conceptual replication of Study 1 results. Study 1 results indicated that participants recalled more glorifying events compared to critical events. Accordingly, the first comparison (in Study 2) tested whether participants indicated a selection bias such that they considered glorifying events as more relevant/important compared to events focusing on assassinations and wrongdoings. The second comparison compared critical ratings to silenced ratings, and evaluated whether critical events are considered as more important/relevant compared to silenced events. Just as failure to recall certain events

(e.g., those that highlight social injustice) may reflect a form of denial or suppression, Study 2 considered how judgments of irrelevance/unimportance of particular categories or themes, may reflect a form of silencing particular historical representations from everyday discourse.

Identity-relevance hypothesis. As in Study 1, Study 2 examined the extent to which representations of the past reflect identity concerns. Particularly, this study examined whether differences in event ratings (in judgments of relevance/importance) were moderated by national identification. To the extent people prefer representations of a national past that meet relevant identity concerns, one can hypothesize that participants who strongly identify with being Indian (compared to low identifiers) will consider glorifying events as more relevant/important compared to critical events that highlight issues of injustice. A more exploratory analysis examined the extent to which national identification moderated differential judgments of critical and silenced events. Recall that I conceptualized silenced events as more about collective wrongdoing and social injustice (compared to critical events). Accordingly, silenced events may be less identity-enhancing compared to critical events, suggesting that participants who strongly identify with being Indian (compared to low identifiers) may consider silenced representations as less relevant/important compared to critical events.

Measures

Ratings of historical events. Participants rated each historical event (ten glorifying, five critical, four silenced) on relevance and on importance to the study of Indian history using a scale of 1(*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*). See below for the original text.

I think this event is very relevant to the study of Indian History.

I think this event is very important to the study of Indian History.

I compiled the average of these ratings for each event type to create composites of overall evaluation of each type ($\alpha_{\text{glorifying}} = .95$; $\alpha_{\text{critical}} = .89$; $\alpha_{\text{silenced}} = .86$).

National identification. Participants completed the same four-item measure of national identification as in Study 1 (e.g., I am glad to be Indian; $\alpha = .88$).

Results and Discussion

Analysis of Historical Themes

I conducted repeated measures ANOVAs to examine whether evaluation of event (importance/relevance ratings) differed as a function of type of event (glorifying, critical, and silenced). Results indicate the hypothesized effects for type of events, $F(1, 93) = 41.67, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .31$. Participants rated the glorifying events as most important/ relevant ($M = 5.88, SD = .87$), followed by the critical events ($M = 5.37, SD = .93$), and considered the silenced events as least relevant/important to the study of Indian history ($M = 5.00, SD = .93$).

To specifically test the hypothesized comparisons, I conducted two planned contrast analyses. The first contrast compared glorifying ratings to the mean of the remaining two ratings (critical and silenced). The second contrast compared critical ratings to silenced ratings. The first contrast was significant, $F(1, 93) = 70.98, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .43$, and indicated that participants considered the nation-glorifying events more relevant/important compared to events that focused on issues of injustice. The second contrast was also significant, $F(1, 93) = 14.00, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$, and indicated that participants considered critical events as more relevant/important compared to silenced events.

Identity-Relevance Hypothesis

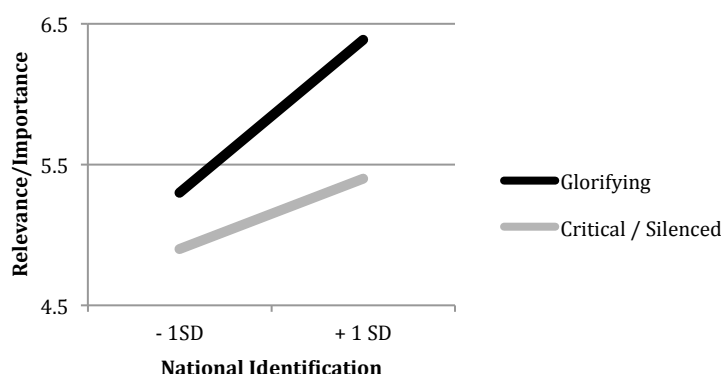
The identity-relevance hypothesis suggests that the differences in event ratings are moderated by identity-relevant concerns. More specifically, this hypothesis tested whether

national identity moderated relevance/importance judgments such that the effects described in the preceding paragraph—considering glorifying events as more relevant/important compared to silenced and critical events, and considering critical events as more relevant/important compared to silenced events—is larger among high-identifying participants (compared to low identifiers). To test this identity-relevance hypothesis, I conducted mixed-model repeated measures analyses with national identification as the moderator of within-subject variation in judgments of relevance/importance for each comparison/contrast.

Comparison 1: Glorifying versus critical and silenced events. This comparison examined the extent to which rating judgments differ between the glorifying events and mean of critical and silenced events (i.e., glorifying vs. injustice comparison). To investigate this, I first averaged the relevance/importance ratings of the critical and silenced events. I then included this average index and the glorification rating in the repeated measures model. I included national identification as a continuous moderator to examine the extent to which identification moderated the difference between the two groups of events (glorifying vs. critical and silenced). Results indicated a significant interaction, $F(2, 92) = 15.24, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .14$. This suggests that difference in event ratings was moderated by participants' national identification. Simple slope analysis indicated that those who identified more strongly with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered all historical representations as more relevant/important (and corresponding with correlation results). Alternatively stated, national identification was positively associated with judgments of relevance/importance for all categories of events. However, the significant interaction result suggests that there was a significant difference between the two slopes. Particularly, the relationship between national identification and relevance/important judgments was stronger for nation-glorifying events, $b = .59, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .43$, compared to critical and

silenced events, $b = .28$, $p = .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .12$, (see Figure 2). Thus, participants who highly identified with being Indian (compared to low identifiers) considered the glorifying events as more relevant/important for the study of Indian history, compared to critical and silenced events.

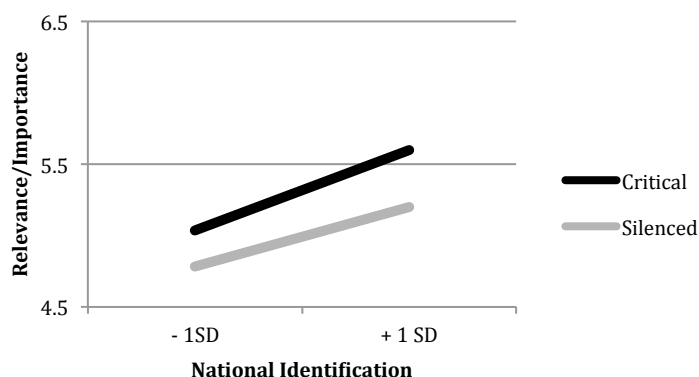
Figure 2. The moderated effect of identification on comparison 1 (Glorifying vs. Critical and Silenced)



Comparison 2: Critical versus silenced events. I conducted a similar analysis as above, except this time I included relevance/importance ratings for critical and silenced events as the two repeated measures. Results did not indicate a significant interaction, $F(2, 92) = 1.26$, $p = .26$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$.⁶ Simple slope analysis revealed that national identification was positively associated with considerations of relevance/importance, and this relationship did not differ as a function of event type. In other words, national identification did not moderate participants' judgments about the relevance and importance of critical and silenced events. Those who strongly identified with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered both, critical events ($b = .34$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$) and silenced events ($b = .23$, $p = .021$, $\eta_p^2 = .06$) as relevant/important (see Figure 3).

⁶ The main effect of rating scores was significant as in the first set of repeated measures analysis. Participants rated the critical events as more relevant/important compared to silenced events, $(1, 92) = 14.02$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .13$.

Figure 3. The moderated effect of identification on comparison 2 (Critical vs. Silenced)



Analysis of Sub-themes

In Study 1, I discussed some of the sub-themes that emerged from the analysis of the events generated by the participants. However, because of the large variation in frequency of the various types of events I did not have sufficient power to examine within-theme (e.g., sub-themes within glorifying events) variation in recall as well as its association with national identification. Accordingly, another objective of Study 2 was to explore the within-theme variation in judgments of relevance/importance. In the discussion below I report findings from analysis of two sub-themes within each event type. I examine (i) the extent to which ratings of relevance/importance differed across each pair of sub-theme, and (ii) the extent to which national identification moderated these differences in event ratings.

Glorification sub-themes. In Study 1, I discussed how glorifying themes either focused on (i) events associated with the independence movement (or freedom movement) from British colonization, or (ii) events that occurred prior to British colonization and associated with production of Hindu-culture (Hindu-focused). A mixed-model repeated measures analysis indicated that participants did not differ in their ratings of Hindu focused events ($M = 5.86$, $SD = 1.02$) and independence focused events ($M = 5.88$, $SD = .91$), $F(1, 92) = 1.33$, $p = .25$, $\eta_p^2 =$

.014. There was no interaction with national identification, $F(2, 92) = 1.53, p = .22, \eta_p^2 = .016$. Simple slope analysis indicated that participants who strongly identified with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered both Hindu-focused ($b = .57, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .29$) as well as independence focused events ($b = .65, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .48$) as relevant/important to the study of Indian history. In sum, these results indicated that participants considered both sub-themes relevant/important and did not differentiate between them. Moreover, identification did not moderate their judgments of relevance/importance. Those who identified strongly with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered both sub-themes as equally important/relevant.

Critical sub-themes. The critical themes focused on (i) assassination of national leaders (Mahatma Gandhi, Indira Gandhi, and Rajiv Gandhi), and (ii) events associated with wrongdoing (e.g., destruction of Babri Masjid). Results indicated no difference in relevance/importance ratings between the two sub-themes, $F(1, 92) = .002, p = .96, \eta_p^2 = 0$. Thus, participants considered the assassination theme ($M = 5.52, SD = .93$) and wrongdoing theme ($M = 5.25, SD = 1.05$) equally relevant/important. There was no interaction with national identification, $F(2, 92) = .25, p = .62, \eta_p^2 = .003$. Simple slope analysis revealed that participants who strongly identified with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered both assassination-focused events ($b = .40, p < .001, \eta_p^2 = .13$) as well as Muslim-focused events ($b = .35, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .11$) as relevant/important to the study of Indian history. In sum, these results indicated that participants considered both sub-themes relevant/important and did not differentiate between them. Moreover, identification did not moderate judgments of relevance/importance. Those who identified strongly with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered both sub-themes as important/relevant.

Silenced sub-themes. The silenced themes focused on (i) events involving the removal of land ownerships rights of Dalits (lower caste group) and tribal groups, and (ii) events focusing on governmental actions that suppressed outcries of oppression through use of militaristic forces. Results indicated no difference in relevance/importance ratings between the land ownership sub-theme ($M = 5.03$, $SD = .98$) and the government sub-theme ($M = 4.97$, $SD = 1.02$), $F(1, 92) = .70$, $p = .40$, $\eta_p^2 = .008$. There was no interaction with national identification, $F(2, 92) = .54$, $p = .40$, $\eta_p^2 = .006$. Simple slope analysis indicated that national identification was positively associated with judgments of relevance/importance for the militaristic sub-theme ($b = 3.39$, $p = .01$, $\eta_p^2 = .07$) and to some extent, the government-sub theme ($b = .19$, $p = .09$, $\eta_p^2 = .03$). In sum, these results indicated that participants considered both sub-themes relevant/important and did not differentiate between them. Moreover, identification did not moderate judgments of relevance/importance. Those who identified strongly with being Indian (vs. low identifiers) considered both sub-themes as important/relevant.

To summarize, there was no variation in rating scores within each event type (glorification, critical, and silenced), and national identification did not moderate any difference between relevance/importance judgments of the various sub-themes.⁷

Correlational analyses (see Table 2) suggest that national identification was positively associated with relevance/importance judgments of glorifying, critical, and silenced events, as well as sub-themes within each type of event (with the exception of silenced events that focused

⁷ The neutral events focused on (i) partition of the Indian sub-continent (into what is now India and Pakistan) and (ii) the Mughal Dynasty, a predominantly Islamic period. Results from a mixed model repeated measures analysis suggest no difference in ratings of relevance/importance, $F(1, 92) = 2.64$, $p = .12$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$. There was no interaction with national identification, $F(2, 92) = 1.47$, $p = .23$, $\eta_p^2 = .01$. Simple slope analysis revealed that national identification was positively associated with rating scores of partition themed events ($b = .48$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .17$), as well as events that focused on the Mughal empire ($b = .62$, $p < .001$, $\eta_p^2 = .02$). Since the focus of this project is to specifically examine how nation-glorifying events differ from events focusing on wrongdoing and injustice, I do not discuss these results in the main document.

on removal of land ownership rights). However, the strength of correlations differed between the event types. Analyses of within-subject differences in correlation coefficients provide similar results as in mixed-model repeated measures analyses. The relationship between national identification and glorification ratings ($r = .66, p = .01$) was more positive than the relationship between identification and the averaged ratings for critical and silenced events ($r = .35, p = .001, t(91) = 4.14, p < .001$; Comparison 1). This indicates that the association between identification and glorification ratings was significantly stronger than the association between identification and ratings of critical and silenced events. There was no difference between identification and critical ratings ($r = .36, p = .01$), and between identification and silenced ratings ($r = .24, p = .04; t(91) = 1.18, p = .12$; Comparison 2). Similarly, there were no differences between identification and each of the sub-themes, $ps > .12$. To summarize, correlational analyses provide similar results as in the mixed model repeated-measures analyses: National identification was more positively associated with ratings of glorification events versus those that focused on injustices and wrongdoings (critical and silenced). Alternatively stated, as people increased in national identification they were more likely to consider glorification events as relevant and important, compared to critical and silenced events.

Table 2.

Intercorrelations, means, and standard deviations for measured variables in Study 2.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
1. National ID	1	.66**	.36**	.24*	.35**	.69**	.54**	.37**	.33**	.26*	0.18	6.01	0.98
2. Glorifying (G)		1	.64**	.32**	.55**	.97**	.89**	.59**	.50**	.36**	.23*	5.88	0.87
3. Critical (C)			1	.48**	.86**	.57**	.57**	.92**	.82**	.43**	.46**	5.37	0.93
4. Silenced (S)				1	.86**	.26*	.21*	.49**	.41**	.92**	.93**	5	0.93
5. Avg. CS ⁺					1	.48**	.45**	.82**	.71**	.78**	.81**	5.18	0.8
6. G: Independence						1	.81**	.54**	.45**	.31**	0.17	5.88	0.91
7. G: Hindu							1	.52**	.40**	.22*	0.16	5.86	1.02
8. C: Assassination								1	.62**	.47**	.43**	5.52	0.93
9. C: Wrongdoing									1	.31**	.43**	5.25	1.05
10. S: Government										1	.70**	4.97	1.02
11. S: Land Policies											1	5.03	0.98

** $p < .01$; * $p < .05$; + Avg. CS = Average of critical and silenced ratings.

Summary

Study 2 results indicated how frequency of different categories of glorifying and critical events that participants generated in Study 1 corresponded to ratings of relevance and importance by participants in Study 2. Participants in Study 2 considered the glorifying category (most frequent in Study 1) as more relevant/important (compared to the critical category). Alternatively stated, participants considered the critical category (least frequent in Study 1) as less relevant/important (compared to the glorifying category). Thus patterns of engagement (differential recall in Study 1 and differential rating judgments in Study 2) were similar across two different samples of participants. Events that particularly focused on wrongdoing and social injustice (i.e., silenced themed events) were absent in Study 1 and considered least relevant/important (compared to both, glorifying and critical themes) by participants in Study 2. In this way, results from these studies suggest that glorifying representations of history are more likely to be reproduced as they are recalled more often (perhaps because they are more accessible or available) and considered as more important to the study of Indian history. Results also suggest that events focusing on wrongdoing and social injustice are less likely to be reproduced (and more likely to be silenced) as they are partially or completely absent from participants' memories (either because they are not aware of these events or perhaps because they suppress their knowledge of these events) and considered as less important and relevant to the study of Indian history.

Results from both studies also indicated that differences in recall/ratings were associated with national identity concerns. Study 1 provided limited evidence of the association between national identification and recall of events. As participants increased in national identification, they recalled more glorifying events in their first response. Study 2 results indicated a

moderating effect of national identification on participants' differential ratings of historical themes. As participants increased in national identification they were more likely to consider glorifying events as more important/relevant, compared to critical and silenced events. Study 2 results also indicated that even when one does make silenced and critical events more accessible participants, especially those who strongly identified with India, denied the relevance/importance of these events. These ratings are important to consider as, one may be less likely to reproduce those events (e.g., not discuss it in conversations on history, exclude from history curricula) that are considered less relevant/important. Accordingly, relevance and importance judgments can serve as ways to examine what representations are selected for cultural reproduction (e.g., included in history curricula), and what representations are excluded or silenced. Moreover, the moderating effect of national identification suggests that selection decisions are associated with identity concerns. Representations that are more identity-enhancing (i.e., glorifying events) are more likely to be reproduced compared to those that focus on historical injustices.

A limitation of Study 2 is the variation in the number of events presented. Participants read ten glorifying events, five critical events, and four silenced events. It is possible that their relevance and importance judgments corresponded to the frequency of event type presented. For instance, participants may have considered glorifying events as more important and relevant in part because they were asked about this type of event more number of times compared to silenced events. Thus, their relevance and importance judgments may have been a function of the number of events presented rather than their psychological engagement with the different types of events. Studies 3 and 4 address this limitation as participants in both studies are presented with an equal number of glorifying, critical, or silenced events.

Conclusion

Taken together, results from studies 1 and 2 provide evidence for one direction of the mutual constitution model: *the psychological constitution of socio-cultural worlds*. Specifically results suggest that representations of history (i.e., tools for collective memories) are not neutral or objective accounts of the past, but instead reflect identity concerns. Results imply that through repeated acts of preferential selection (or denial) of particular representations of history, people may reconstruct their past in ways that are associated with their identity needs and beliefs. Moreover repeated acts of selection or denial may then influence the content of more official historical narratives (e.g., history curricula, museum content) that in turn may also influence people's everyday recollections of the past.

Recall that a cultural psychological perspective also proposes that identity does not emerge naturally (i.e., develop solely through physiological maturation). Thus, when I discuss the effects of identity in Studies 1 and 2, I do not mean to suggest that these differences between high and low identifiers are characteristic of stable, enduring traits inherent within individuals and abstracted from the cultural context. Instead, I draw upon a cultural psychological perspective to suggest that people's identification is shaped also by engagement with their everyday worlds. Studies 3 and 4 examine the extent to which national identification is influenced by engagement with different representations of the past. In this way, Studies 3 and 4 also investigates the extent to which representations of history not only reflect identity concerns (as evidenced in Studies 1 and 2) but also promote identity-relevant concerns.

CHAPTER 3

Sociocultural Constitution of Psychological Experiences

Studies 3 and 4 examine the bottom arrow (see Figure 1) of the mutual constitution model: *the sociocultural constitution of psychological experiences*. This direction suggests that identity is a product of interactions with socio-cultural worlds. Conversely, representations of history are not neutral but direct subsequent psychological experiences and behavioral tendencies towards particular ends.

Studies 3 and 4 examined the extent to which representations of the past influence people's national identification and identity-relevant perception. In particular, these studies examined how historical representations induce people to acknowledge (or deny) present-day issues of injustice. Thus, these studies tested the hypothesis that representations of history influence identity experience and identity-relevant outcomes (through a between-subjects experimental design).

Study 3

Method

Participants

Participants included 65 adult users (25 women) of Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk program, who participated in exchange for \$1.00 credited to their Amazon account. All participants were born and currently lived in India. They ranged in age from 21 years to 54 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 30.66$, $SD = 7.24$).

Procedure

As in Study 2, participants first read several historical events. However, Study 3 involved a between-subject design, and participants were randomly assigned to read events that were

categorized as either glorifying, critical, or silenced. Each of these conditions included four historical events that were selected from Study 2. The glorifying condition consisted of four events that reflected national achievements (e.g., freedom movement, development of the constitution). The critical condition consisted of critical events (used in Study 2 and generated by participants from Study 1) and included events that reflected wrongdoing (e.g., demolition of Babri mosque) and focused on assassination of national leaders (e.g., assassination of Indira Gandhi). Finally, the silenced condition included all four events used in Study 2. These events were absent from recall responses in Study 1 and focused on wrongdoing and social injustice (See Appendix B for the list of events used).

Participants read and rated each event on (i) relevance and (ii) importance, and then completed measures of national identification, perceptions of injustice, and a demographics section.⁸ Participants used 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to respond to all items.

Measures

Ratings of historical events. Participants rated each historical event on relevance and importance to the study of Indian history (e.g., “I think this event is very relevant to the study of Indian History”). I created an average of relevance and importance ratings for all four events to create a composite index of overall evaluation of historical events ($n = 8$; $\alpha = .90$).

National identification. Participants responded to the same four items (as in Studies 1 and 2) that assessed national identification (e.g., “I am glad to be Indian”, $\alpha = .89$; Leach et al., 2008).

⁸ As noted earlier, I included an open-ended measure of religious and caste identification across all four studies. Inclusion of caste and religious identification (as well as gender) as covariates did not change the significance of results across all studies. I report analyses that do not include any covariates (across all four studies).

Perceptions of injustice. Study 3 assessed the extent to which exposure to particular types of history events (e.g., those focusing on injustice versus national glorification) was associated with greater perception of present-day issues of injustice. Accordingly, participants responded to three items that assessed perceptions of injustice in Indian society ($\alpha = .75$; see Adams, Thomas, Tormala, & O'Brien, 2006). Participants rated the extent to which each event reflected forms of prejudice, discrimination, or injustice in India. Items included, “The practice of asking north eastern Indians for their passports as evidence of their Indian citizenship”, “Members of the Border Security Force (BSF) often ask Kashmiri Muslims—compared to Kashmiri pundits—if they are militants” and “The University of Hyderabad launched their 2011 initiative to curb drinking and drug use on campus by particularly working with students from the north-east.” Higher scores on this measure indicated a greater perception of current-day issues of injustice in Indian society.

Results and Discussion

To test for the hypothesized differences between the various events, I conducted a series of one-way analysis of variance (ANOVAs) on the above-mentioned measures with history event type as the between-subjects variable. As in Study 2, the focus was on testing two contrasts with codes of (1, -.5, -.5) and (0, 1, -1). The first contrast compared mean outcomes of participants in the glorifying condition with the mean outcomes of participants in the remaining two conditions (critical and silenced). This comparison evaluated the hypothesis that nation-glorifying events promote identity-enhancing outcomes (i.e., higher levels of national identification, lower levels of perceptions of injustice), compared to critical and silenced events that focus on assassinations, injustice, and wrongdoing. The second contrast compared mean outcomes of participants in the critical condition to the silenced condition. This comparison examined whether mainstream

representations that were less explicit about injustice and wrongdoing (i.e., critical condition) promoted more identity-enhancing outcomes (i.e., higher national identification, lower perceptions of injustice) compared to representations that focused on wrongdoing and social injustice (i.e., silenced condition). Means and standard deviations of outcome measures for each condition appear in Table 3.

Table 3.
Means and standard deviations of outcome variables in Study 3.

	Glorifying	Critical	Silenced
Relevance/Importance Ratings	6.01 ^a (0.86)	5.41 ^b (1.29)	4.72 ^c (0.84)
National Identification	6.19 ^a (0.77)	5.63 ^b (1.33)	5.69 ^b (0.64)
Perceptions of Injustice	4.32 ^a (1.12)	4.94 ^b (1.20)	5.18 ^b (0.87)

Note. Standard deviations are in parenthesis. Different letter superscripts within rows indicate statistically significant ($p < .05$) differences.

Ratings of Historical Events

The first set of analysis examined if participants considered the glorifying events as more relevant and important compared to critical and silenced events (comparison 1), and critical events as more relevant and important compared to silenced events (comparison 2). In particular, this set of analysis examined whether Study 3 conceptually replicated Study 2 rating results.

The omnibus ANOVA for ratings of relevance and importance was significant, $F(2, 61) = 8.21, p = .001, \eta_p^2 = .21$. The first comparison was significant and indicated that participants rated nation-glorifying events as more relevant and important to the study of Indian history than critical and silenced events, $p = .001$. The second comparison was also significant and indicated that, among non-glorifying items, participants rated the critical events as more relevant and important than silenced events, $p = .03$. Alternatively stated, participants considered events focusing on wrongdoing and social injustice (i.e., silenced events) as least relevant and important to the study of Indian history. Recall that these silenced events were entirely absent from

participants recall responses in Study 1 and also considered least relevant/important in Study 2. Participants may have not generated these responses in Study 1 because they considered them less relevant, and perhaps suppressed knowledge of these events.

Identity-relevant outcome

The next set of analysis examined whether the glorifying condition promoted more identity-enhancing outcomes—higher national identity, lower perceptions of injustice—compared to the critical and silenced conditions. I also examined whether mainstream representations that were less explicit about injustice and wrongdoing (i.e., critical condition) promoted more identity-enhancing outcomes—higher national identification, lower perceptions of injustice—compared to representations that focused on wrongdoing and social injustice (i.e., silenced condition).

National identification. The omnibus ANOVA test was non-significant, $F(2, 62) = 2.30, p = .11, \eta_p^2 = .07$. The first contrast was significant and indicated that participants had higher national identity scores in the glorifying condition compared to the critical and silenced events, $d = .52, p = .037$. This suggests that exposure to nation-glorifying events (compared to critical and silenced events) promoted identity-enhancing outcomes. The second contrast was not significant and suggested no difference in national identity scores between the critical and silenced conditions, $d = -.05, p = .86$. In other words, exposure to events that emphasized wrongdoing and historical injustice (compared to critical events that focused on assassination of national leaders and alluded to wrongdoing) did not impact national identification. Recall that Study 2 results also suggested that national identification did not moderate relevance/importance judgments of silenced events, compared to critical events. In other words, silenced events did not reflect differential identity-concerns compared to critical events.

Perceptions of injustice. The omnibus ANOVA test was marginally significant, $F(2, 62) = 2.69, p = .076, \eta_p^2 = .08$. The first contrast was significant and indicated that participants perceived less injustice when exposed to nation-glorifying events compared to critical and silenced events, $d = -.64, p = .03$. Alternatively stated, participants perceived more present-day issues of injustice in Indian society when exposed to critical and silenced events compared to the glorifying events. The second contrast was not significant and suggested no significant differences between the silenced and critical conditions, $d = -.24, p = .48$. However, the pattern of means—lowest in the glorification condition and highest in the silenced condition—suggests a linear trend in the effectiveness of silenced representations in promoting perceptions of injustice. Polynomial contrast analysis indicates that this linear trend was statistically significant, $d = .54, p = .028$.

The above results indicate that nation-glorifying events (versus critical and silenced) directed participants to increase their identification with India, and reduce their acknowledgement of present-day inequities. Alternatively stated, critical and silenced events directed participants to decrease their identification with India, and acknowledge the role of discrimination in present-day inequities.

Mediation Analysis

The above pattern of results raises the possibility of an indirect effect of condition (i.e., exposure to particular historical events) on either perceptions of injustice (via national identification) or on national identification (via perceptions of injustice). On one hand, the effect of dis-identifying with the nation may allow people to be more open about perceiving present injustices. If one does not identify with a national community, then one may not rely on this community for a positive identity experience (Tajfel & Turner, 1986), and consequently one may

be more open to acknowledging information that can reduce the positive image of the national community and/or information that is threatening to a nation (e.g., acknowledge present-day issues of injustice in Indian society). Accordingly, one can hypothesize that a decrease in national identification is associated with an increase in perceiving present-day injustice in Indian society. This suggests an indirect effect of condition on perceptions of injustice via national identification.

On the other hand, one may dis-identify or distance from a national community, when one perceives present-day accounts of wrongdoing and injustice, particularly if the in-group is responsible for these acts of wrongdoing. The act of distancing or dis-identifying can be a response to buffer threat experience (e.g., threat to values; Branscombe, Ellemers, Spears, & Doosje, 1999) and to reduce feelings of shame by distancing from the perpetrator category (Johns, Schmader, & Lickel, 2005). For example, Biernat & Eidelman (2003) found that when people are presented with negative information about an in-group member (compared to an out-group member), they engage in distancing strategies by either dis-identifying from their in-group or by devaluing the target individual. Participants engaged in either distancing strategy depending on what was available first. Applying this to the present work, when participants perceive issues of injustice in present-day Indian society—while this is not negative information about an in-group member per se as in the case of Biernat and Eidelman, it does present negative information about the national (primarily dominant group) community—they may engage in a distancing strategy by dis-identifying from the nation. Participants in this case cannot devalue a particular in-group member or devalue the nation, as they are not presented with that option. This line of reasoning suggests that there may be an indirect effect of condition on national identification via perceptions of injustice.

To test both possibilities, I conducted two sets of mediation analysis (bootstrapped with 1000 iterations) and included contrast 1—glorifying versus critical and silenced—as the independent variable, contrast 2—critical versus silenced—as the covariate (in accordance with Hayes, 2013), national identification as mediator (model 1) or outcome (model 2) variable, and perceptions of injustice as outcome (model 1) or mediator (model 2) variable. Results provide no evidence for either indirect effect (confidence intervals contained zero). The confidence interval of the first mediation model (Condition → Identification → Perception) was $CI_{95} [-.11, +.34]$ and the confidence interval for the second model (Condition → Perception → Identification) was $CI_{95} [-.26, +.09]$. In both models (identification as outcome and perceptions of injustice as outcome), the path between the mediator and outcome was non-significant, $bs < .13$, $ps > .25$. In other words, there was no association between national identification and perceptions of injustice.⁹ This was surprising because previous research (as noted in discussion of alternative mediation models) suggests a negative association between identification and perception. However, this was not the case in the present study.

How is one to interpret this pattern? Given that this was an experimental manipulation it is possible that exposure to different historical representations also influenced people's conceptions or definitions of national identity (i.e., what it means to be Indian). Accordingly, this suggests that instead of just displaying different judgments of the same object (i.e., different levels in strength of national identification where conceptions of nation are the same), experimental exposure may have also promoted people to construct different objects of judgment

⁹ Correlational analyses indicate no association between national identification and perceptions of injustice across all conditions as well as within the glorifying and silenced condition, $ps > .24$. There was a positive correlation between identification and perception in the critical condition, $r = .51$, $p = .02$. It is unclear why the two variables were correlated only in this particular condition. Since Study 4 involved a similar design as Study 3, I conducted similar analyses to examine whether this differential pattern would be replicated. I report the results of the analyses in discussion of Study 4 results.

(i.e., strength of identification interacts with different conceptions of the nation; see Ross & Nisbett, 1991/2011 for a discussion). For instance, it is possible that exposure to critical and silenced representations led participants to endorse inclusive and civic-based conceptions of Indian identity that defines national identity in terms of social responsibilities and civic duties. Higher levels of identification—for those who endorse civic-based conceptions—may be associated with more inclusive outcomes (e.g., perceiving more injustice). In contrast, some participants may have felt threatened by critical and silenced representations, and the experience of threat may have led participants to endorse more exclusive conceptions of identity and define national identity in terms of dominant group values (e.g., to be Indian one must be Hindu). Higher levels of identification—for those who endorse exclusive conceptions of identity—may be associated with a decrease in perceptions of injustice against groups who do not fit with dominant group standards. I elaborate on this point in the general discussion section (Chapter 4).

Summary

Participants rated the glorifying condition as more relevant and important to the study of Indian history compared to the conditions that mentioned historical injustices and wrongdoing (critical and silenced conditions). This pattern corresponded to the Study 1 and Study 2 results: Participants recalled more glorifying events (compared to critical events; Study 1) and considered them more relevant and important (compared to critical and silenced events; Study 2).

More importantly, Study 3 results provided evidence for the bottom arrow direction of the mutual constitution model: *sociocultural constitution of psychological experiences* (Figure 1). Exposure to glorifying events led to an increase in national identification, compared to exposure to critical and silenced events, which highlighted historical injustice and wrongdoing. Nation-glorifying events were also less effective in promoting perceptions of present-day issues

injustice in Indian society, compared to events that focused on historical injustices (critical and silenced events). Note that glorifying events were more prominent than critical events in the free-recall responses of Study 1 participants, and glorifying events were also associated with higher relevance judgments than critical and silenced events among participants in Study 2, especially amongst those who strongly identified with being Indian. This suggests that glorifying events are not just neutral representations of the past. Instead, they reflect high-identity concerns and also promote higher identification and denial of injustice than do critical and silenced events.

One shortcoming of Study 3 is that the design does not include a control condition. This makes it difficult to ascertain whether the glorifying condition *increased* national identification (or *decreased* perception of injustice) or whether the critical and silenced conditions *decreased* national identification (or *increased* perception of injustice). Study 4 included a control condition to assess the influence of condition on identity and identity-relevant outcomes, relative to a “baseline.”

Study 4

In Chapter 2, I discussed some of the sub-themes that I identified for each event type. Recall that the glorifying events focused on the freedom movements that led to the independence of India as well as events/timelines that were predominantly Hindu-focused and prior to British colonization. It is possible that representations of history that focus on dominant group experiences (e.g., development of sacred Hindu scriptures that established the caste system) promote different identity-relevant outcomes compared to those that focus on national-achievements but do not reflect a particular group’s experiences (e.g., large scale events that resulted in independence from British colonization). Study 4 tested this possibility and accordingly had four conditions: control, critical (same as in Study 3), glorifying-freedom

(focusing on independence movement), and glorifying-Hinduism (focusing on pre-British era in which there was a Hindu influence).¹⁰

Method

Participants included 160 adult users (58 women, 4 unknown) of Amazon.com's Mechanical Turk program, who participated in exchange for \$1.00 credited to their Amazon account. All participants were born and currently lived in India. They ranged in age from 20 years to 62 years ($M_{\text{age}} = 30.62$, $SD = 7.99$).

Procedure

Participants were randomly assigned to one of four conditions. Participants in the three treatment conditions (exposure to historical representations) rated each event (total of four events per condition), and then completed measures of national identification, perceptions of injustice, and demographic information. The critical events were the same as ones that I used in Study 3. I selected events for the two glorification conditions from the glorifying events generated in Study 1. Participants in the control condition only completed outcome measures. Unless otherwise noted, participants used 7-point Likert scales ranging from 1 (*strongly disagree*) to 7 (*strongly agree*) to respond to all items.

Measures

Ratings of historical events. As in Studies 2 and 3, participants rated each historical event on relevance and importance to the study of Indian history. Each participant completed four ratings of relevance and four ratings of importance for each of the three treatment conditions

¹⁰ In consideration of critical sub-themes (in Chapter 3), I identified ones that highlight assassination of national leaders and ones that emphasize wrongdoing. Since there were not enough items on wrongdoing, I could not create a separate condition out of these events. Instead, I included silenced events (in studies 2 and 3) to examine how events focusing on wrongdoing and injustice against marginalized groups reflect and reproduce identity-relevant concerns. The addition of silenced events served as a way to assess for differences between the critical sub-themes (discussed in Chapter 2).

(critical, glorifying-freedom, and glorifying-Hinduism). I compiled the average of these eight ratings to create a composite of overall evaluation of the historical events ($\alpha = .89$).

National identification. Participants completed the same four-item measure of national identification as in Studies 1-3 (e.g., I am glad to be Indian; $\alpha = .85$).

Perceptions of injustice. Participants completed the same three-item measure of perceptions of injustice as in Study 3 (e.g., The practice of asking north eastern Indians for their passports as evidence of their Indian citizenship; $\alpha = .76$).

Results and Discussion

As in Study 3, the first set of analysis examined rating judgments between the treatment conditions (i.e., critical and two glorifying conditions). Particularly, I examined whether participants considered (i) glorifying events in both glorifying conditions as more relevant/important than critical events, and (ii) Hindu-focused glorifying events as more relevant/important than independence-focused glorifying events. The next set of analysis examined whether there were differences in national identification and perceptions of injustice between the four conditions. As in Study 3, the focus was on examining particular contrasts that reflected the hypotheses of interest. I provide more details on the contrasts after reporting results from the first set of analysis (focusing on relevance/importance judgments). Means and standard deviations of outcome variables appear in Table 4.

Table 4.
Means (and Standard Deviations) of outcome measures

	Control	Critical	Glorifying- Independence	Glorifying - Hindu
Relevance/Importance Ratings	n/a	5.40 ^a (1.01)	5.90 ^b (0.86)	6.06 ^b (0.90)
National Identification	6.27 ^a (0.76)	5.96 ^{+b} (0.86)	6.27 ^a (0.79)	6.43 ^a (0.66)
Perceptions of Injustice	5.08 (1.35)	5.27 ^{*a} (0.97)	4.83 ^b (1.21)	4.76 ^b (1.42)

Note. Standard deviations are in parenthesis. Different letter superscripts within rows indicate statistically significant ($p < .05$) differences.

⁺The difference between critical and control on national identification was marginally significant, $p = .071$.

*Critical condition differed from both glorifying conditions on perceptions of injustice. There was no other significant difference for this outcome.

Ratings of Historical Events

The omnibus ANOVA was significant, $F(2, 118) = 5.6, p = .005, \eta_p^2 = .09$. Participants considered the critical themes less relevant and important ($M = 5.4, SD = 1.01$), compared to the two glorifying conditions (Hindu focused: $M = 6.06, SD = 0.90$; Independence focused: $M = 5.90, SD = 0.86$), $d = -.58, p = .002$. There was no difference in rating scores between the two glorifying conditions, $d = -.15, p = .46$.

The next set of analysis examined the extent to which the experimental manipulation influenced identity-relevant outcomes. To examine the hypotheses of interest, I examined four contrasts. The first comparison (-1, 1, 0, 0) compared the control condition to the critical condition and investigated whether the critical condition *decreased* identity-enhancing outcomes (i.e., decreased national identification, increased perceptions of injustice) relative to the control. The second comparison (-2, 0, 1, 1) examined whether the glorifying conditions *increased* identity-enhancing outcomes relative to the control. The third comparison (0, 2, -1, -1) compared the critical condition to the two glorifying conditions and corresponded to analyses from studies 2 and 3. Finally, the fourth comparison (0, 0, 1, -1) compared the two glorifying conditions (independence movement versus predominantly Hindu representations).

Identity-relevant outcomes

The first set of analyses examined the condition effects (i.e., with respect to the four comparisons) on national identification and perceptions of injustice.

National identification. The omnibus ANOVA was significant, $F(3, 157) = 2.64, p = .051, \eta_p^2 = .05$. The first contrast was marginally significant and indicated that participants had lower identity scores in the critical condition compared to the control condition, $d = -.31, p = .071$. This provides marginal evidence that exposure to historical injustice decreased national identification, compared to a “baseline.”

The second contrast was not significant, $d = .15, p = .62$, and indicated that compared to the control condition, there was no significant increase in identity scores in the two glorifying conditions.

The third contrast was significant, $d = -.78, p = .009$ and indicated that participants had lower identity scores in the critical condition compared to the two glorifying conditions. This conceptually replicates Study 3 results.

Finally, the fourth contrast suggested a pattern such that exposure to predominantly Hindu representations increased national identification ($M = 6.43, SD = .66$), compared to the independence movement representation. ($M = 6.27, SD = .78$). However, the test for contrast effect indicate non-significant results, $d = -.15, p = .37$, thereby indicating that there were no significant differences in identification between the two glorifying conditions.

To summarize, results from contrast analyses suggest that the critical condition *decreased* national identity, relative to the control condition and relative to both glorifying conditions.

Perceptions of injustice. The omnibus ANOVA was not significant, $F(3, 156) = 1.42, p = .24$. The first two contrasts were not significant and suggested that there was no difference in

identification scores between control and critical conditions ($d = .18, p = .54$; Contrast 1) and between control and both glorifying conditions ($d = -.58, p = .23$; Contrast 2).

The third contrast was significant, $d = .95, p = .05$ and indicated that participants in the critical condition perceived more injustice compared to the two glorifying conditions. This conceptually replicates Study 3 results.

The fourth contrast was not significant, $d = .06, p = .83$ and demonstrated that there was no difference in identity scores between the two glorifying conditions.

To summarize, results indicate that participants in the critical condition perceived a greater level of injustice in Indian society, compared to those in the two glorifying conditions. Finally, as in Study 3, the pattern of means—lowest in Hindu-glorification condition and highest in the critical condition—suggests a linear trend in the effectiveness of critical representations in promoting perceptions of injustice. Polynomial contrast analysis indicates that this linear trend was statistically significant, $d = -.39, p = .048$. Conversely, this suggests that glorifying events, especially those that focused on dominant group experiences, tended to decrease perception of current-day injustices.

Mediation Analysis

As in Study 3, there are two possible indirect effects of condition. On one hand, the effect of dis-identifying (as a result of exposure to critical versus glorifying conditions) may increase perceptions of injustice. On the other hand, acknowledging and perceiving current issues of injustice may decrease national identification. To test both possibilities, I conducted two sets of mediation analysis (bootstrapped with 1000 iterations) and included contrast 3 (critical vs. two glorifying conditions) as the independent variable, the remaining contrasts as covariates (in

accordance with Hayes, 2013), identification as mediator (model 1) or outcome (model 2) variable, and perceptions of injustice as outcome (model 1) or mediator (model 2) variable.

As in Study 3, results indicate no evidence for either indirect effect (confidence intervals contained zero in both models). The confidence interval of the first indirect effect (Condition → Identity → Perception) was $CI_{95} [+0.02, -0.01]$ and the confidence interval for the second indirect effect (Condition → Perception → Identity) was $CI_{95} [-0.03, +0.01]$. In both cases (identification as outcome, and perceptions of injustice as outcome), the path between mediator and outcome was non-significant, $bs < -.07, ps > .64$. Correlational analyses indicate no association—across all four conditions as well as within each condition—between national identification and perceptions of injustice, $ps > .33$. As noted in discussion of Study 3 results, I provide a possible explanation for this null effect in the general discussion section.

Summary

Replicating results of studies 2 and 3, participants rated the critical and silenced events (compared to glorifying events) as less relevant and important to the study of Indian history. Study 4 also provided evidence for the bottom arrow of mutual constitution model: *sociocultural constitution of psychological experiences* (Figure 1). Participants exposed to representations of history highlighting historical injustices (i.e., critical condition) scored lower in national identification compared to participants exposed to nation-glorifying events, and to some extent, compared to participants who were not exposed historical events (i.e., control condition). Study 4 results suggest that the difference between the critical and glorifying conditions was primarily because exposure to the critical events *decreased* national identification scores. There was no difference in national identification scores between the glorifying conditions and the control condition, suggesting that exposure to nation-glorifying events does not produce identity-

enhancing outcomes. Instead, exposure to events focusing on assassination of national leaders and wrongdoing (i.e., critical condition) leads to a reduction in identification.

Results also indicate some effects of condition on identity-relevant outcomes.

Replicating Study 3 results, participants in the critical condition perceived a greater level of injustice in Indian society, compared to those in the glorifying conditions. Pattern of means and analysis of linear trend suggest that critical events were more effective in promoting perceptions of injustice, and that exposure to glorifying events—especially those that focused on dominant group experiences—tended to decrease perceptions of injustice. However, since the control condition was not significantly different from the treatment conditions, the preceding result must be interpreted with caution.

Conclusion

Taken together, results from studies 3 and 4 provide evidence for the bottom arrow of the mutual constitution model: *the sociocultural constitution of psychological experiences* (see Figure 1). Specifically results suggest that representations of history promote identity-relevant experiences (i.e., levels of national identification, perceptions of present-day injustice). This implies that historical representations are not inert products. Instead engagement with particular representations produces particular outcomes.

Participants' level of identification with their national community was based on their engagement with particular historical representations. Those who read events focusing on wrongdoing and injustice felt a lower sense of belonging with Indians and experienced less positive feelings about belonging to India (see Leach et al., 2008 for a discussion of the various identity sub-scales), compared to those who read nation-glorifying events. This effect is similar to the process of individual mobility (Tajfel & Turner, 1979), in which individuals attempt to

dis-identify with their in-group and attempt to succeed on their own when faced with information that threatens the image of their group or devalues their group. It is possible that in the present case, the act of reducing national identification served as an individual protection strategy (as in the case of Eidelman & Biernat, 2003) as participants could disassociate themselves from the broader national community that perpetrated acts of injustice and wrongdoing.

More broadly, the effect of condition on identification suggests that national identification is not a static, unchanging feature of individuals (Adams et al., 2010; Tajfel & Turner, 1986; Reicher, 2004). Instead, it is shaped through engagement with cultural tools present in everyday worlds. People construct an experience of national belonging based on their interactions with their cultural context. This has implications for the collective nature of mind, and suggests that the location of psychological phenomena resides in sociocultural worlds. This idea suggests that identity is constituted through interactions with one's environment and is thereby located in the environment (versus being abstracted from the context).

Results from Studies 3 and 4 also indicated that when exposed to events focusing on wrongdoing and injustice—critical and silenced condition in Study 3 and critical condition in Study 4—compared to nation-glorifying events, participants tended to agree that there was more discrimination and oppression in present-day Indian society.

The notion of how beliefs about current-day injustice and discrimination are associated with historical knowledge of past injustices has been studied in the U.S. context. Prior research has documented racial differences between White Americans and ethnic minority group members in the U.S. in perception of racial equality (Eibach & Ehrlinger, 2006) and knowledge of racial discrimination (Nelson, Adams, & Salter, 2013). Developmental psychologists have noted similar racial differences amongst children and adolescents (Brown, Alabi, Huynh, &

Masten, 2011; Hughes & Bigler, 2011; Patterson, Pahlke, & Bigler, 2013). For example, as early as 4th grade, African American and Latino youth indicate greater awareness of racial bias compared to White American youth (Brown et al., 2011). More recently, Nelson and colleagues (Nelson, Adams, & Salter, 2013) suggested that racial differences in perception of racism amongst adults are mediated by historical knowledge of past accounts of race-related injustices. These researchers found that compared to Black participants, White participants were less aware of past accounts of racism (measured by a history test) and perceived less racism in American society. The difference in historical knowledge mediated the differences in perception of racism. Thus, being aware of historically documented accounts of racism led to greater perception of current-day issues of racism. Similarly, Salter (2010) found that exposure to historical representations that emphasized racial barriers faced by Black Americans led participants to perceive a greater influence of racism in American society, compared to exposure to representations that emphasized celebratory achievements of particular individuals.

Together, the above examples suggest that awareness or knowledge of past accounts of injustices and oppression impact judgment of present events (i.e., perception of present-day injustice). Some might argue that the effect of exposure to historical events on perception of injustice is reflective of demand characteristics and priming influences such that participants are primed with the theme of injustice when exposed to events that focus on injustices. As a consequence of this prime manipulation, they have been more likely to note present-day accounts of injustice. While this may be the case, it is important to consider the source of these events, especially in the context of the present work. Participants from Study 1 generated the critical events (i.e., events focusing on injustice and assassination). Note that they were less prominent in the free recall task in Study 1, and considered less relevant to the study of history in Study 2.

While critical events might prime injustice, and therefore promote participants to score higher on the measure on perceptions of injustice, results from Studies 1 and 2 suggest that they are also less likely to be prevalent in the environment, and their absence prompts people to not consider or perhaps even deny current-day issues of injustice. Finally, their absence (based on recall and judgments of relevance) is not merely a coincidence but is subject to identity concerns. Events focusing on injustice and wrongdoing (compared to nation-glorifying events) are less reflective of identity-enhancing concerns and also less likely to promote identity-enhancing outcomes. Accordingly, results suggest that historical events that focus on injustices and wrongdoings (or “injustice primes”) may be less likely to be selected or reproduced to avoid the subsequent outcomes (i.e., reduction in identification, increase in perceptions of injustice).

The decision or intention to reproduce certain representations (and silence others) may not solely operate at the individual level. For instance, on an individual level, one may ask the participant who fails to recall critical events (Study 1) whether s/he intends to reproduce representations that promote the denial of present-day injustice. In contrast, on a collective level and consistent with a cultural psychological approach (Adams et al., 2010; Vygotsky, 1978), one may also consider whether particular representations of history (e.g., glorifying events) fulfill the purpose of denial (of present-day injustices). Regardless of the individual intention of the participant who recalls glorifying events and fails to recall critical events, the events generated direct subsequent identity-relevant experiences (Studies 3 and 4), and in doing so, may re-deposit the ‘intention’ (to deny injustice) into a cultural context. I expand on this point in the conclusion section of Chapter 4.

CHAPTER 4

General Discussion

The present work draws upon a cultural psychological perspective to examine variation in collective memory of Indian history and the consequences of this variation for identity-relevant outcomes. In one direction (and associated with the *psychological constitution* direction of the mutual constitution framework), people's recollections of the past and their judgments of relevance/importance for historical representations are reflective of identity-concerns. In the other direction (and associated with the *sociocultural constitution* direction of the mutual constitution framework), historical representations promote identity-relevant experiences that are consistent with the identity-concerns of those that produced the materials.

Evidence for the *psychological constitution* direction comes from Studies 1 and 2. As part of a free-recall task, participants in Study 1 generated more nation glorifying events compared to critical events focusing on historical injustice. Results indicated that the more participants identified as being Indian, the more likely they were to recall nation-glorifying events or less likely they were to recall events focusing on wrongdoing and assassinations (critical events), in their first response. Moreover, there was a noteworthy absence of events focusing on social injustices and events that explicitly indicated accounts of wrongdoing (silenced events). In Study 2, I exposed a new sample of participants to the events that participants in Study 1 had generated (as well as a set of silenced events that I generated). Results indicated that participants considered the nation-glorifying events as more relevant/important to the study of Indian history, compared to those highlighting issues of injustice and wrongdoing (critical and silenced events). This variation in rating corresponded to the frequency of category of events (glorifying versus critical) recalled in Study 1. Strength of identification moderated the difference in ratings.

Participants who identified more strongly with being Indian showed greater discrepancies in judgments of relevance and importance for nation-glorifying and critical events.

Evidence for the *sociocultural constitution* direction comes from Studies 3 and 4 where I examined the consequences of exposure to representations of history on national identification and perceptions of injustice. Results from Study 3 indicated that exposure to events focusing on injustice and wrongdoing (critical and silenced events) reduced participants' national identification and increased their perceptions of current-day injustice, compared to nation-glorifying events. Similarly, Study 4 experimentally manipulated exposure to historical representations and indicated that exposure to critical events decreased national identification and increased perceptions of injustice, compared to the glorification (for identification and perception) and control "baseline" (for identification) conditions. Conversely, results from Studies 3 and 4 suggest that glorifying events promote identity-enhancing and/or identity-protective concerns and are less effective in enabling people to recognize present-day issues of injustice.

Together, results across the four studies suggest that the presence and absence of particular historical representations in collective memory do not emerge by accident. Instead, they are reflective of specific identity concerns. Representations that are more consistent with identity-enhancing concerns may be more likely to be remembered and selected for the study of history. Repeated acts of recall and selection can have implications for what is reproduced and what is silenced in a cultural context (e.g., selected for inclusion in a history textbook). Historical representations are also not the end products of psychological activity. Instead, they promote identity-relevant experiences. Likewise, identity-relevant experiences do not emerge naturally but are products of engagement with one's sociocultural context. In this way, the studies provide

support for the bi-directional relationship between cultural context (i.e., historical representations) and psychological experience (i.e., national identification and perceptions of injustice).

Limitations and Future Directions

Focus on dominant-group participants. A major limitation of this project is the absence of participants belonging to subordinate groups (e.g., Muslims, scheduled caste, scheduled tribe). While the focus on dominant group members (e.g., middle class, educated Indians) reflects my interest in examining how mainstream historical narratives promote dominant group interests (e.g., denial of injustice targeting marginalized groups) an important task for future research is to consider representations from historically oppressed groups and examine the identity-relevant phenomena they reflect and promote.

Generation of events. The inclusion of subordinate group members is especially important to consider given that participants in Study 1 were the source of the historical events that were used in subsequent studies. Recall that there was a relative absence of critical events, and a complete absence of silenced events (i.e., events that emphasized issues of wrongdoing and social injustices) in recall responses. The restricted range of events might possibly be due to the identity characteristics of the participants who produced them (i.e., primarily dominant-group members). It is possible that subordinate group members might generate an alternative set of historical events.

Why might that be the case? People's reconstructions of the past are often associated with experiences of their own traditions. For example, through their experiences with commemorative rituals or institutions such as state, religion, or family, people construct certain accounts of the past (Pennebaker & Banasik, 1997; Schwartz, 1991). Accordingly, individuals belonging to

subordinate groups (and who are historically oppressed) may engage with a different set of memories of the past than those belonging to the dominant groups (and who are more likely to benefit from past and present inequalities). Moreover, given that subordinate group members may also engage with a more mainstream cultural context (e.g., history education that does not reflect their group's experiences but reflects dominant group interests), their memories may interact with engagement with more "official narratives" to reflect and promote different identity-relevant phenomena (compared to dominant-group members).

Differential impact on identification. Researchers have suggested that national identification is associated with perceptions of how one's subgroup is treated in a given society (Huo, Molina, Binning, & Funge, 2010; Taylor, 1994). Accordingly, prior research has noted that members of more dominant groups (e.g., White Americans in the U.S.) identify more strongly with the superordinate national category, compared to members of subordinate groups (Staerklé, Sidanius, Green, & Molina, 2005/2010; Stevenson & Muldoon, 2010). Such differences can arise in part because subordinate group members are often the targets of injustice and discrimination, and consequently feel devalued by majority group members. The rejection identification model suggests that when subordinate group members (e.g., African Americans in the U.S.) perceive that they are the targets of discrimination, they feel a greater sense of belonging towards their subgroup members, and greater hostility towards dominant group members (e.g., White Americans) who are responsible for perpetuating injustices against their group (Branscombe, Schmitt, & Harvey, 1999). More recently, Molina and colleagues (Molina, Phillips, & Sidanius, in press) found that perceived group discrimination—experiencing discrimination due to membership in a particular subgroup—was negatively associated with patriotic feelings towards the U.S. for Latinos and African Americans, but not for White

Americans. Similarly, Huo, Molina and colleagues (Huo, Binning, Molina, & Funge, 2010; Huo & Molina, 2006) have indicated that amongst minority group members, perceptions of subgroup respect—the extent to which an institution acknowledges, values, and accepts a subgroup—is positively associated with identification towards the institution. Huo and Molina (2006) found that the more African Americans and Latinos perceived their subgroups as being respected by most Americans (i.e., U.S. as the institution), the more they identified with the U.S. Applying this line of research to the present work, it is possible that engagement with historical representations, especially ones that highlight wrongdoings and social injustices against subordinate groups, can have a different impact on national identification (and identity-relevant outcomes) based on whether one identifies with a subordinate or dominant group.

Free-recall task. Another possible reason for the limited range of historical events could be due to the particular set of instructions in Study 1. The instructions of the free-recall task required participants to list events that they believed all students should know about. Considering the student sample, these instructions could have reminded participants about their formal history education, and therefore influenced them to consider the events that were most prevalent in history curricula and critical for success in history examinations. This could have then restricted the range or type of events considered. An alternative way to investigate the relationship between identity and memory is to ask participants (belonging to more than one sub-group; see first limitation point) to generate events that either focus on historical injustices or focus on historical achievements, and then examine the number of events recalled in each condition (injustice vs. achievements). As in the current project, one can then examine how recall of events reflect and promote identity-relevant phenomena (e.g., strength of identification, acknowledgement of disadvantage as well as privilege).

If it is the case that the current set of instructions primed the students to recall official narratives of history—and one could assess that by either comparing the current set of responses to official narratives and/or examining the extent to which the current responses differ from those that result from the revision proposed in the preceding paragraph—then it becomes important to consider the role of power and privilege in what constitutes as official or “relevant” forms of historical knowledge. Official historical narratives are often more prevalent in the environment and can play a crucial role in what are considered “objective” accounts of the past. When members of historically oppressed groups offer alternative accounts of the past (i.e., ones that reflect wrongdoing or social injustices), their accounts may be silenced or forgotten as they are seen as irrelevant forms of objective reality or historical “truth.” Dominant group members—who are likely to benefit from their higher social status—can silence alternative accounts that undermine the legitimacy of current inequalities and hierarchies or reconstruct them in ways to justify past and current inequalities. For example, prior research has indicated that majority group members in New Zealand, who also have higher scores on a social dominance measure (see Sidanius & Pratto, 2001), are more likely to negate their in-group’s responsibility for historical wrongdoings against indigenous groups (i.e., subordinate groups). By not acknowledging their role in past injustices, majority group members can justify the social inequalities between them and indigenous group members (Sibley, Wilson, & Robertson, 2007). Thus, the silencing (through acts of omission or commission) of past accounts of injustice and wrongdoing can lay the foundation for identity-protective perception (e.g., denial of current issues of injustice) and contribute towards maintaining systems of inequality in a given society.

Strength versus meaning of national identity. Although results of Studies 3 and 4 provide evidence for the hypothesized effect of historical representations impacting national

identification, the effect on national identification did not mediate a similar effect on identity-relevant outcomes. Examination of Studies 3 and 4 found no association between strength of identification and perceptions of injustice. Since these studies involved an experimental manipulation, it is possible that engagement with particular historical representations influenced people's *conceptions* or *beliefs* of Indian identity (e.g., what it means to be Indian or beliefs about the national category) along with impacting their level of identification (e.g., how much one identifies as being Indian). One can test this by adding an open-ended measure that asks participants to list what it means to be a 'true' Indian, and/or adapting existing measures on content of national identification (e.g., Mukherjee, Molina, & Adams, 2012; Pehrson, Vignoles, & Brown, 2009) to suit the Indian context (e.g., asking whether to be 'truly' Indian one needs to be able to speak Hindi or be Hindu).

Previous research suggests that strength of in-group identification is associated with negative behavioral intentions towards out-groups only when the meaning of group identity is defined in terms of intergroup antagonism (Livingstone & Haslam, 2008). For instance, Dutch participants who strongly identified with the Netherlands were more supportive of Muslim immigration to the Netherlands when exposed to historical narratives emphasizing Dutch tradition of being open and tolerant of groups belonging to various religious faiths, compared to being exposed to narratives that emphasized the Christian history of the nation (Smeekes, Verkuyten, & Poppe, 2011).

It is possible that critical representations of history that illuminate historical injustices may direct attention to the obstacles and barriers faced by particular groups (e.g., religious minorities in India). This in turn may promote an inclusive and civic-based conception of Indian identity that defines identity in terms of social responsibilities and civic duties (see Mukherjee et

al., 2012 for a discussion of constructions of national identity). To the extent people endorse such civic-based conceptions of Indian identity, higher level or strength of identification may promote more inclusive outcomes (e.g., perceiving more injustice), rather than dominant-group serving ends (i.e., denial of injustice; see also Wright, Citrin, & Wand, 2012). However, participants who feel threatened by critical representations of history and disengage with the content may not endorse civic-based conceptions. Instead, the experience of threat may promote endorsement of an ethnic–assimilationist construction that defines Indian identity in terms of assimilation to dominant group values (e.g., celebrating Hindu national holidays) or membership to dominant groups (e.g., upper caste). Previous research, in American and European contexts, has associated ethnic-assimilationist conceptions of identity with perceptions of threat from immigration, desire to decrease immigration levels, and the preference for minorities to assimilate rather than maintain their own cultures and traditions (Ceobanu & Escandell, 2008; Citrin & Sides, 2008; Pehrson et al., 2009; Wright, 2011). In a similar fashion, it is possible that endorsement of ethno-assimilationist conception of identity can decrease perceptions of present day injustice in Indian society.

It is also possible that particular representations *reflect* particular conceptions or beliefs about Indian identity. For instance, participants who generated critical events in Study 1 may have endorsed civic-based conceptions of identity to a greater extent than those who did not. Accordingly, they may have considered events that are more likely to encourage others (i.e., those who interact with historical representations) to be socially responsible and work towards alleviating injustices. It is also possible that this pattern (civic-based identity associated with greater recall of critical events) interacts with their strength of identification. If people who identify more strongly with being Indian also endorse civic-based conceptions of identity, they

may be more invested in alleviating inequalities within Indian society, and consider it as a form of national duty, compared to those who endorse ethno- assimilationist constructions of identity, but also identify strongly with being Indian.

An exploration of meaning of identity may also help explain null effects in analysis of sub-themes (in Studies 2 and 4). Study 2 indicated that there was no moderating effect of (strength of) national identification on relevance judgments between the two glorification sub-themes. Similarly, Study 4 found no difference in national identification scores between the two glorification conditions. It is possible that the two sub-themes reflected and influenced different conceptions of Indian identity. Events that highlight independence from British colonization (i.e., freedom movement) may be associated with civic-based conceptions of identity as they emphasize collective action and social responsibilities. Events that highlight the revival of Hindu culture and emphasize Hindu scriptures may be associated with ethno-assimilationist conceptions of identity as they focus on dominant group (e.g., Hindus in India) values. Thus, an examination of content of identity (along with strength of identification) can provide more nuanced understandings of the ways in which collective memory and national identity are mutually constituted.

Methodological concerns. I adapted the situation sampling methodology (Kitayama et al., 1997; Morling et al., 2002) to examine how representations of history reflect and promote identity-relevant concerns. An important contribution of this methodology is that it provides an understanding of how people remember and engage with a (national) past in ways that serve identity-relevant beliefs. Results suggest that events that are associated with identity-enhancing outcomes (e.g., high national identification, low perception of injustice) are more likely to be preferentially selected (e.g., via recall or relevance judgments). By using the events generated by

participants (Study 1), this methodology provides an understanding of how this process of preferential selection (or denial) has implications for future participants who interact with the selected (or silenced) historical representations.

Strengths and limitations of situation sampling method. A primary strength of this approach is ecological validity as it uses historical representations that people actively recollect, and examines how these representations reflect identity-relevant beliefs as well as reproduce identity-relevant experience amongst novel groups of participants who engage with them. However, a weakness of this approach is that it is difficult to emphasize the conceptually important characteristics of the various events. For instance, participants who recalled the assassination of Indira Gandhi (coded as critical) failed to mention the set of events that led to the assassination. There was no mention of the potential act of wrongdoing against a religious minority group (i.e., Sikhs) that preceded the assassination. It is possible that participants' failure to elaborate on these events was a result of the lack of visual space available in the questionnaire. One can address this by providing more space or conducting interviews (instead of using questionnaires) in order to allow participants to provide more nuanced responses. Alternatively, the researcher can expand on such events. For instance, in writing about the assassination of Indira Gandhi, the researcher can expand on the event and highlight the history of violent acts committed by Hindus and Sikhs against each other, and the continuing discrimination faced by Sikhs. From a conceptual standpoint, this event becomes "more" critical in that it emphasizes the issues of wrongdoing and social injustice to a greater extent compared to the original event (generated by participants) that merely described the assassination of a national leader. Similarly, events on the golden age of Hindu culture (coded as glorifying) can be expanded to draw attention to the development of Hindu scriptures and how they are associated with the origin of

the hierarchical caste system. A more precise test of how historical representations reflect and promote identity-relevant experiences may thus require an intervention from the researcher to produce more conceptually specific stimuli (e.g., critical events that strongly emphasize social injustice or glorifying events that strongly emphasize the reproduction of Hindu culture). This remains a consideration for future research.

Measuring forgetting. Evidence for forgetting came from Study 1 results, which indicated that participants recalled more nation glorifying events compared to those that highlighted past injustices and wrongdoings. Moreover, even in their recall of glorifying events, participants did not recall events that reflected subordinate group achievements or milestones (e.g., construction of Taj Mahal in the Islamic period). The generation of events (via recall task) was important as it allowed for an investigation of the consequences of exposing information that people produce (or information that is absent) on identity-relevant outcomes. However, it is difficult to determine whether the differences in patterns of recall are due to a lack of knowledge of certain types of events or if they are because participants are unwilling to repeat and selectively forget information that threatens the image of a national community or threatens the legitimacy of their dominant group status. A more precise test of forgetting can involve the exposure of particular types of events (i.e., glorifying and critical) and test participants' memories of these events. Moreover, by examining the association between national identification and the memory task, one can then investigate whether the process of forgetting occurs selectively such that people forget information that threatens their beliefs about a national community (e.g., historical accounts of wrongdoing), compared to information that affirms their beliefs about a national community.

Rating judgments. The current work assessed engagement with historical representations in terms of relevance and importance ratings (Studies 2-4). One limitation of this measure is that participants tended to have higher scores on relevance and importance for all types of events. Particularly, across all studies (that assessed relevance and importance), participants tended to have scores above the mid-point of the 7-point scale used (i.e., scores of 4 and above). Moreover, results from Study 2 indicated a positive association between identification and both, critical and silenced events (even though the strength of this association was significantly lower than the association between identification and glorifying events).

It is possible that there was a ceiling effect such that participants considered history events—regardless of type—as important for the study of Indian history. This may have been especially the case for highly identified Indians. Despite this possibility, results indicate differences in relevance and importance judgments for various types of events: Participants rated glorifying events as more important and relevant, compared to those focusing on injustice and wrongdoing. Study 2 results also indicated a moderated effect of national identification in their rating judgments of glorifying events versus critical and silenced events. However, these differences in ratings may be even stronger if one were to use an alternative selection measure. For instance, another method to assess how participants tend to engage with and reproduce particular representations (e.g., glorifying) over others (e.g., critical) could be to ask participants to select a sub-set of history events for consideration in a history curricula, and examine how their identification scores are associated with their selection judgments. In this case, participants would also be required to not select certain events, and therefore address the possible ceiling effect that may have taken place in the present work.

Conclusion

Collective construction of psychological experiences. Without downplaying limitations, a key contribution of the present work is the application of a cultural psychological perspective towards the study of collective memory and national identity. More specifically, the current project illuminates the collective character of psychological experiences. Rather than use “collective” in terms of content of psychological experiences (e.g., individual memory versus collective memory that entails a group-level focus), a cultural psychological perspective also uses collective in terms of process through which psychological experiences are constructed.

Memory as a collective process. For instance, consider the study of memory. A content-based approach uses the term collective to make distinctions between individual memories (and pertaining to personal identities as in social identity theory) and group memories (and pertaining to social identities). In contrast, a cultural psychological perspective considers the collective sources of memory (e.g., Wang & Brockmeier, 2002), regardless of whether one considers individual memory or those pertaining to social identities. From this perspective, the process of remembering is a cultural practice as it is mediated through engagement with cultural tools (e.g., representations of history, language) present in a given context. Likewise, the process of not remembering particular events is also mediated through engagement with cultural tools.

Some scholars have referred to certain forms of historical knowledge as “occluded memories” (Wineburg, 2001). Occluded memories refer to forms of knowledge that members of a community (typically, those in roles of power) cannot easily retrieve or no longer consider important for discussions of national history. Even when memories are occluded, they are available in books, on the Internet, and in academic discussions (e.g., conferences and academic journals). However, they are not part of mainstream historical discourses and therefore not very

salient. Moreover, as Wineburg (2001) notes, what is remembered or occluded from the past is dynamic. It is constantly (re)shaped by interactions with cultural products such as formal acts of commemorations (e.g., presidential speeches on Thanksgiving), and/or decisions by filmmakers and novelists to focus on certain historical events and omit others. People learn to remember certain events, and learn not to remember certain events as they continuously engage with such products. These products are in turn the behavioral residues of prior action. In this way, people's knowledge of the past is necessarily mediated through and regulated by representations of the past. Representations of the past are in turn regulated by preferential selection tendencies of previous actors.

Identity as mediated action. Now consider the topic of identity. A content-based approach discusses the collective character of identity as individual (or personal) identity or as social identity (pertaining to memberships in groups). In contrast, a cultural psychological perspective proposes that regardless of whether identity operates at the individual or group-level, it necessarily requires engagement with cultural tools (e.g., tools for memory), and this engagement makes it a collaborative or collective process. Thus, the act of identifying with, or distancing from, a nation is necessarily mediated through interactions with (psychologically constituted) cultural tools. The present work provides some evidence of how national identification influences the content of historical representations that people produce (and not produce) in a given context. These representations in turn serve as repositories of knowledge and influence subsequent identification. Continuous interactions with similar representations may further strengthen (or reduce) one's identification with a national community. Thus, the subsequent act of identifying (or dis-identifying) is necessarily mediated through cultural products (e.g., representations of history). These cultural products in turn are products of action

and thereby associated with particular psychological tendencies (e.g., identity correlates of participants in Study 1).

The above understanding of collective draws upon an ecological and dynamic conceptualization of culture as “patterns of historically derived and selected ideas and their material manifestations in institutions, practices, and artifacts” (Adams & Markus, 2004; Adams et al., 2010). This understanding of culture focuses on engagement with residues of prior activities (e.g., history curricula or films/novels) that reflect the beliefs of the initial actors—who constructed or performed particular behaviors or actions—and also direct future behavior and action of those who engage with these residues. Through this form of analysis, one can then consider how in directing people towards particular ends (e.g., engagement with identity-enhancing representations) a cultural context may also lead people to ignore other ends (e.g., critical representations that highlight injustice). If one narrative is privileged (by directing people to engage with it), another is silenced or ignored (Mills, 2007). In this way, a cultural context can direct one to behave in certain ways and also direct one to *not* behave in other ways (e.g., denial of injustice; see Barker, 1968).

Finally, the above-mentioned understanding of collective also helps distinguish a cultural psychological analysis from priming effects. As noted earlier in Chapter 3, a critic may argue that the effect of exposure of history events on perception of injustice is due to priming. While this may be the case, it is important to consider the extent to which certain primes (e.g., nation-glorifying primes or events) occupy certain spaces (e.g., people’s memories or history curricula) while certain primes (e.g., injustice primes or events) are absent from certain spaces. Results from Study 1 suggest that nation-glorifying events or ‘primes’ were more accessible in participants’ memories compared to those focusing on injustice and wrongdoing. Moreover,

results from Studies 1 and 2 provide partial evidence of how national identification is associated with the reproduction of particular events or primes (i.e., recall of particular events; relevance/importance ratings). This suggests that the presence or absence of particular events or primes is not ‘just natural’ but may be driven by identity-concerns. Highly identified Indians, compared to low identifiers, may reproduce particular events or primes, which in turn, can influence identification and perception of a subsequent group of Indians who engage with them.

Representations of history as tools for (liberatory) identity concerns. The project also contributes to a cultural psychological approach to topics of injustice and oppression. Results from this project suggest that historical representations that focus on national achievements are more prevalent in judgments of national history, and accordingly may be more prevalent in the environment. The production of such events lays the foundation for identity-protective (e.g., denial of injustice) perception. In contrast, alternative representations of history that reflect experiences of more marginalized groups (e.g., those that highlight social injustice and wrongdoing) may alert people to present-day experiences of injustice, and may provide bases for reparative action to alleviate the injustices. In this way, a cultural psychological approach illuminates the importance of recovering historical memory (i.e., giving voice to previously silenced events, see Martín-Baró, 1994, p.31) and incorporating the experiences of marginalized groups in everyday environments (e.g., representing their experiences in history textbooks rather than silencing them). Finally, it implies that identity and collective memory processes may operate as tools for change and reparative action (Hammack, 2008; Reicher, 2004; Van Zomeren, Postmes, & Spears, 2008).

As a closing point, consider again the opening quotations and example. They highlight the ways in which people remember or silence certain historical events. The present work points

attention to the collaborative or collective nature of this process. Particularly it suggests that an initial actor's identity concern may result in subsequent ignorance (or forgetting) of certain events, amongst a novel group of people. Thus, one person's (e.g., Person A's) preferential selection may regulate another person's perception of current-day events. Moreover, if Person A belongs to a group with higher status and power in a given society (e.g., Hindus in India) and preferentially selects events that reflect his/her group's values, then repeated acts of such preferential selection may reproduce systems of inequality that privilege dominant group experience and silence subordinate group experiences.

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Appendix A

History events used in Study 2

Glorifying Events

1. Dandi March (Salt Movement) of 1930: This was part of the Indian independence movement and was an action of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly in colonial India.
2. Revolt of 1857: This was the first war of Independence against the East Indian Company.
3. Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920: It aimed at resisting British occupation in India through non-violent means. Protestors refused to buy British goods, and adopted the use of local handicrafts.
4. Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930: This movement involved the large-scale boycott of schools, colleges, and offices. Protestors burnt foreign and stopped paying taxes.
5. Development of Indian Constitution: The constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950. It describes the structure, power, and procedures of government institutions, and the fundamental rights and duties of citizens.
6. Gupta Period: It existed between 320 BC and 550 AD and is often called the Golden Age of India. It extended from what is today most of Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh
7. Indus Valley Civilization/Harappan Civilization: This civilization existed between 2600 BC and 1700 BC and extended from what today is northeast Afghanistan and Pakistan to northwest India. It is one of the earliest and most widespread civilizations in the world
8. Freedom Struggle: This consists of several movements and organizations that aimed towards ending British imperialism in South Asia.

9. Kargil War of 1999: The Kargil War was an armed conflict between India and Pakistan and occurred in 1999 in Kashmir and along the Line of Control (LOC).
10. Indo-Pakistan War of 1971: The Indo-Pakistan War of 1971 was an armed conflict between India and Pakistan during the Bangladesh Liberation War. The end of the war led to the independence of Bangladesh

Critical Events

1. Godhra Riots of 2002: These communal riots resulted in mass killings of Muslims and took place in Gujarat.
2. Demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992: On December 1992, a Hindu group destroyed the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh to reclaim the land known as 'Ram Janmabhoomi'.
3. Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948: Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on January 30, 1948 by Nathuram Godse.
4. Assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984: Indira Gandhi, was assassinated on October 31st, 1984 by two of her Sikh bodyguards, Satwant Singh and Beant Singh. This took place in the aftermath of Operation Blue Star, the Indian army's assault on the Golden Temple in Amritsar which left the temple heavily damaged.
5. Assassination of Rajiv Gandhi in 1991: Rajiv Gandhi was assassinated on May 21st, 1991 by Thenmozhi Rajaratnam. This took place in the aftermath of Indian peace Keeping Forces' involvement in the Sri Lankan Civil War.

Silenced Events

1. Assassination of Hirdai Nath Wanchoo in 1992: Hirdai Nath Wanchoo, Kashmir's human rights activist was assassinated on 5th December, 1992. The Indian Government was allegedly responsible for this as Wanchoo had opposed the Indian government's policies in Kashmir.
2. Armed Forces (Special Powers) Act (AFSPA) of 1958: The Parliament of India passed this Act on September 11th, 1958. It grants special powers to the armed forces in the states of Arunachal Pradesh, Assam, Manipur, Meghalaya, Mizoram, Nagaland and Tripura. The Act grants extraordinary powers to the military, including the powers to detain persons, use lethal force, and enter and search premises without warrant.
3. Punjab Land Alienation Act of 1901: Up until 1952, this act prevented members of Dalit community to own land even if they had the means to purchase land.
4. Government intervention in Bastar: In 1949, the Indian government demarcated 27.5% of the total forest area of Bastar, Chhattisgarh as under cultivation and 57.25% as state-owned forests. This reduced legal access to land for subsistence agriculture and also led to several long cultivators of the land to be labeled as 'encroachers'.

APPENDIX B

History Events used in Study 3

Glorifying Events

1. Dandi March (Salt Movement) of 1930: This was part of the Indian independence movement and was an action of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly in colonial India.
2. Development of Indian Constitution: The constitution came into effect on January 26, 1950. It describes the structure, power, and procedures of government institutions, and the fundamental rights and duties of citizens.
3. Indus Valley Civilization/Harappan Civilization: This civilization existed between 2600 BC and 1700 BC and extended from what today is northeast Afghanistan and Pakistan to northwest India. It is one of the earliest and most widespread civilizations in the world.
4. Gupta Period: It existed between 320 BC and 550 AD and is often called the Golden Age of India. It extended from what is today most of Pakistan, India, Nepal, and Bangladesh. This period was characterized by extensive inventions and discoveries in science, technology, art, literature, mathematics, religion and philosophy that developed the elements of what is generally known as Hindu culture.

Critical Events

1. Godhra Riots of 2002: These communal riots resulted in mass killings of Muslims across three months and took place in Gujarat.
2. Demolition of Babri Masjid in 1992: On December 1992, a Hindu group destroyed the Babri Mosque in Ayodhya, Uttar Pradesh to reclaim the land known as 'Ram Janmabhoomi'.

3. Assassination of Mahatma Gandhi in 1948: Mahatma Gandhi was assassinated on January 30, 1948 by Nathuram Godse.
4. Assassination of Indira Gandhi in 1984: Indira Gandhi, was assassinated on October 31st, 1984 by two of her Sikh bodyguards, Satwant Singh and Beant Singh. This took place in the aftermath of Operation Blue Star, the Indian army's assault on the Golden Temple in Amritsar which left the temple heavily damaged.

Silenced Events (same as Study 2, See Appendix A)

APPENDIX C

History events used in Study 4

Glorifying events: Independence/freedom movement

1. Dandi March (Salt Movement) of 1930: This was part of the Indian independence movement and was an action of tax resistance and nonviolent protest against the British salt monopoly in colonial India.
2. Revolt of 1857: This was the first war of Independence against the East Indian Company. It led to the dissolution of the East Indian Company in 1858.
3. Civil Disobedience Movement in 1930: This movement involved the large-scale boycott of schools, colleges, and offices. Protestors burnt foreign goods and stopped paying taxes.
4. Non-Cooperation Movement in 1920: It aimed at resisting British occupation in India through non-violent means. Protestors refused to buy British goods, and adopted the use of local handicrafts.

Glorifying events: Pre-British/Hinduism focused

1. Indus Valley Civilization: One of the earliest and most widespread civilizations in the world existed between 2600 BC and 1700 BC from what today is northeast Afghanistan to northwest India.
2. Harappan periods: The late-Harappan period of the Indus Valley Civilization featured sophisticated brick cities, built on a grid system, which demonstrated an organized system of urban planning.

3. Gupta Period: This “Golden Age” of India (320 BC to 550 AD) was characterized by extensive work in science, art, literature, mathematics and the elements of what became known as Hindu culture.
4. Vedic Period: It was during this “golden age” of Sanskrit literature (1700 to 500 BC) that the Vedas—the oldest scriptures of Hinduism—were composed.

Critical events (same as Study 3, see Appendix B)